the SPARTANA

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publications department
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Friday, September 6, 2013 | A 2009 Pacemaker Winner | Homestead High School's News Source Since 1969

PHOTO BY ALLIE NELSON

Dean position filled

BY MALLORY MCCAULEY
Writer

Scott Zvers was appointed as the Dean of Students for the 2013-14 school year.

His extensive background in education proved to be a helpful tool in procuring his job as Dean. Throughout his 12 years at Canterbury High School, he was responsible for several different jobs within the school. Zvers spent time as an ethics teacher, a religion teacher and an additional six years as a Dean. Because of his wide array of duties, he gained sufficient experience to fulfill his new position.

"One of my (career) goals is to become an administrator, so this was a great opportunity to do that."

SCOTT ZVERS
Dean of Students

"I wanted to have more experience with administration because one of my (career) goals is to become an administrator, so this was a great opportunity to do that," Zvers said.

Zvers is currently in the process of earning his Master's Degree in order to become involved in administrative work. This school year, Zvers' main concern will be working in the discipline department. However, his job extends to other aspects of the administration as well.

"I'm going to be at a lot of the outside events, the games and the band

▶SEE 'DEAN,' PAGE 2

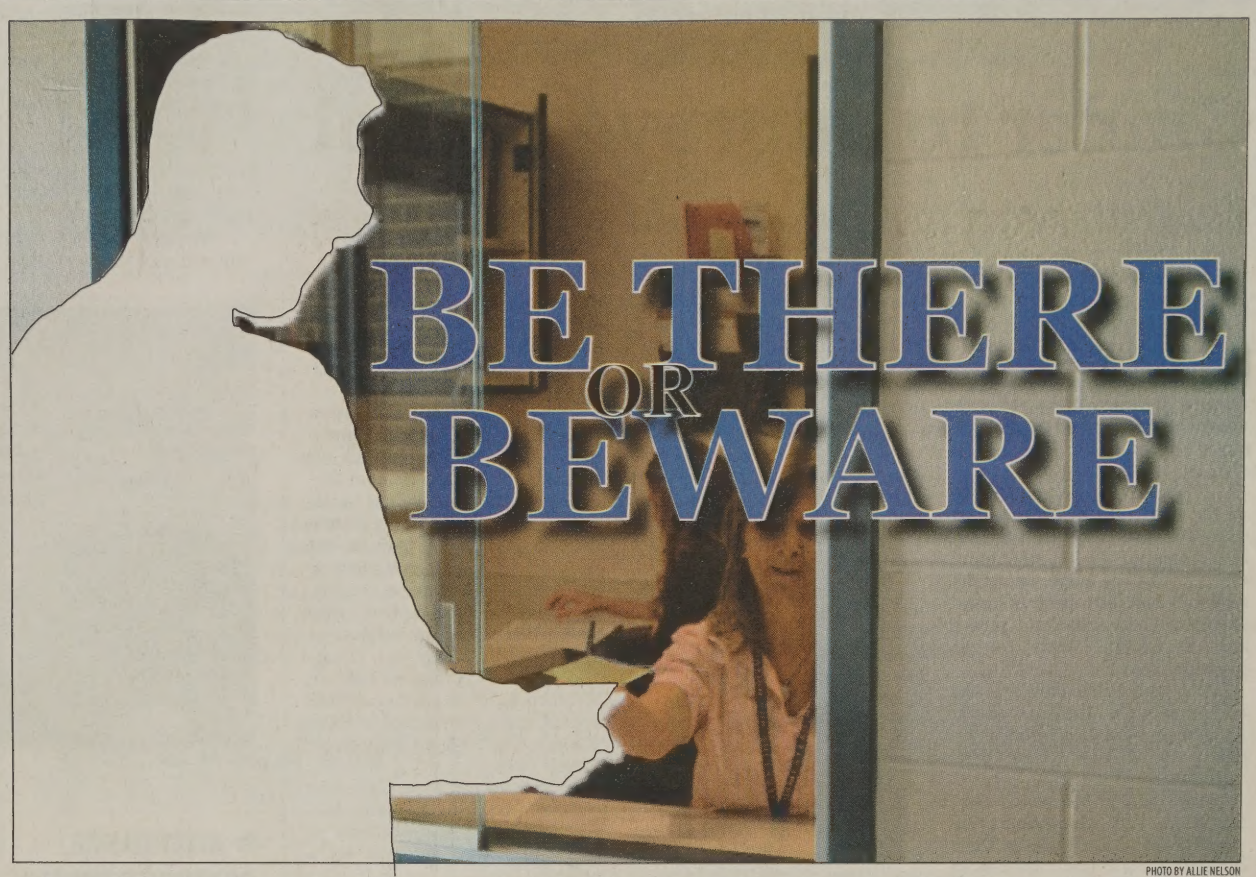

PHOTO BY ALLIE NELSON

New 10 day attendance policy 'encourages student attendance'

BY KATIE DUNLAP
News Editor

The attendance policy has been altered from 10 absences per period to 10 absences total for the 2013-14 school year.

The rule was reformed in part because the district's middle schools, Summit and Woodside, adhered to a different policy. Aligning with the other schools in the district will create a more fluid transition for students entering high school, as freshmen and their parents will not need to learn a new attendance policy.

"The primary change is in years past, we would give 10 parent excuses per period which in essence would be 70 periods. The concern was with our attendance office. They have to track all these periods of attendance... whereas every other building in the district does not adhere to that policy," Jeff Kintz, Assistant Principal, said.

Members of the administration believe that this alteration will make tracking absences much easier, as well as encourage student attendance.

"Last year if a student would miss third period, that excuse counted just as a third period miss. Hypothetically you could miss third period nine more times and still miss second period and first period other days," Susan Summers, Assistant Principal, said. "The new policy encourages attendance, and that (is) really important because if you're not here you can't learn."

Students will not likely be impacted, as the policy on doctor excused days remains intact. After a student misses school for a doctor's appointment or a medical issue, they can bring in a doctor's note and they will still be able to use their 10 parent excused days.

"Parent's excuses come in to play mostly when (students) don't go in to see the doctor or they feel ill during the day and their parents excuse them for the remainder of the day," Kintz said.

The changes will primarily be felt by the attendance office, as the efficiency of their tracking system will be improved. Though the amount of time that students get has been decreased, students will not likely see a major change.

"In total, it's going to be less amount of time (for students), and (the administration understands) that, but the majority of our student body doesn't abuse (the policy). It's only the five percent that (the discipline office) deals with personally that end up abusing it," Kintz said.

Other minor changes to the policy include the way that unexcused absences are handled. Before, a truancy would be automatically applied if a parent could not be reached or forgot to call their child in sick. The truancy would later be removed if the parent was reached and knew where their child was. The protocol has been restructured to restrict the amount of truancies accidently assigned.

"Any given day we may have anywhere from 25 to 100 kids that are out of school. Now, one of the parent

▶SEE 'ATTENDANCE,' PAGE 2

"The new policy encourages attendance, and that (is) really important because if you're not here then you can't learn."

SUSAN SUMMERS
Assistant Principal

BRIEFS

SAT/ACT CLASSES
Classes are being offered to students who plan to take the SAT or ACT. Classes are offered for both the math and verbal portions of the test. Both sessions run from 5:30-8 and meet one day a week. There are a total of five sessions. The cost is $90 for one session, or $170 for both. Classes are taught by Vernell Fettig, a former English teacher, and Junior Stailey, a current math teacher. For more information, contact student services.

VISITING COLLEGES
Colleges will be sending admissions representatives to visit with prospective students in upcoming days. Students need to register in student services and pick up a college visitation pass at least one day prior to the visit they wish to attend. Today, September 6, an admissions representative from Ball State University will be holding a meeting to meet with interested students. Other college admission representatives include those from Vanderbilt, Northwestern and Notre Dame.

SENIOR COLLEGE VISIT DAY
Seniors have the opportunity to either visit collages or job shadow on Wednesday, Oct. 16. Students who wish to do so must alert the school of their intentions immediately. Students must return with necessary paperwork that will exempt them from school. Otherwise, a parent must call in and a parent excused absence will be used. If a student does not wish to job shadow or visit a college, the student will be expected to stay in a supervised study hall. Sophomore and junior students will be taking the PSAT during this time.

Drug dog to conduct random vehicle searches

BY MEGAN READ
Writer

As students return for the 2013-14 school years, they face many changes, including a new principal, a general parking lot and altered attendance policies. One thing unchanged, however, was the school's strict anti-drug stance.

Thor, the dog responsible for patrolling both the school and the parking lot for illegal materials, came back for another year and was as busy as ever.

"Thor is trained to pick up on... anything to do with guns, gun powder and explosives, as well as anything related to narcotics," Ingrid Herriott, resource officer, said.

Officer Herriott and Thor are now familiar faces around the school, always busy keeping the students, staff and people in the building safe from weapon-related threats and illegal substances.

In addition to patrolling the hallways and other busy areas of the school during the day, Officer Herriott and Thor conduct random searches of both students' lockers and cars parked in the school parking lot. While many students

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▶575
Student parking passes purchased for the general lot. Each car is subject to search.

PHOTO BY ALLIE NELSON

Officer Herriott accompanies Thor for a walk outside. Thor will be randomly searching student cars throughout the year for illegal substances.

AP test scores continue steady increase

17 graduated seniors receive prestigious recognition as AP scholars

BY IAN MCKENZIE
Writer

That annual tension felt around late April through late May – frenetic, charged, worried and palpable - once again borned excellent results for the AP students, teachers and administration.

For a program which not long ago held the stigma of being traumatic and inaccessible to all those but the most dedicated, AP scores this year indicated students were not only more comfortable taking harder classes, but also earning higher scores.

The school's scores were up across the board, indicative of both a greater number of new AP students and an extremely dedicated core of students in each class.

For example, there were 437 students with a score of a 3 or higher on an AP test, up from 383 last year, as well as 157 AP Scholars, who are credited with passing a number of AP tests with a high average.

The school is infamous for its impressive numbers of both AP students and the success rate of those students when taking the Collegeboard AP tests.

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THE CLIMB

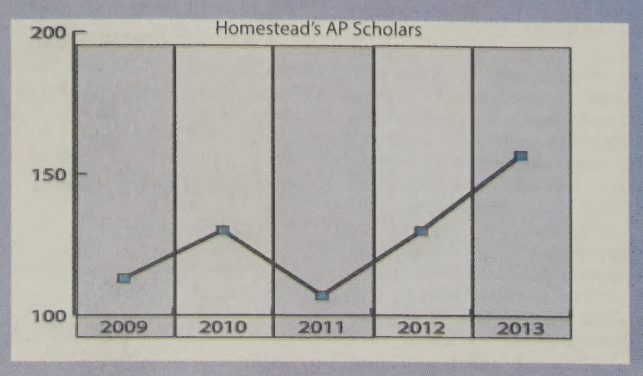

PHOTO BY ALLIE NELSON

Ginder to improve school

Students react to new principal, policy changes

BY MEGAN CATER
Copy Editor

Park Ginder began the school year as the new principal with improved policies and curriculum ideas for the student body and staff.

"We're going to concentrate on the curricular aspects such as integrating technology, utilizing MyBigCampus, becoming more proficient with electronic research methods, project based learning, and writing across the curriculum," Park Ginder, principal, said.

Although curriculum was the main focus for Ginder, students have been focusing more on the policies that have been introduced.

One policy introduced was the "10-10" rule, which states that students are not allowed to leave the classroom to use the restroom or go to their lockers within the first ten and last ten minute time frames of class.

"Research shows that the two most important parts of a teaching period are the first 10 minutes and the last 10 minutes," Ginder said. "The period in between is important; we're doing lecture and practicing, but as we go through the school year, teachers will have learning targets within the first ten minutes."

Controversy, however, over the effectiveness of this policy has arisen among students.

"The 10-10 rule is absolutely crazy," Karly Bailey (12) said. "I don't think it makes any sense to wait 10 minutes to disrupt class in the middle of a lesson to use the restroom rather than wait until the lesson is over to take care of business."

Another idea Ginder suggested called for teachers and students to dress for success. Students quickly learned there would be a no tolerance attitude toward dress code violations this year.

"We are going to enforce the handbook with dress code and attendance, and in some cases, some students are going to feel like it's tighter than it used to be," Ginder said.

Wednesday, Aug. 14, the students first day of school, the office was packed tight with students who chose to disobey the dress code.

Although dress code violations were often issued to students, the abruptness of consequences this year varies greatly than in years past.

"We have laid some expectations; the adults in this building are professionals and we have to present ourselves as such. What we do here is important, and sometimes, dress affects how we perceive what we're doing and how what we do is perceived" Ginder said.

Ginder, in addition, suggested teachers professionalize their attire to fit their career.

"I think he's going to be tough, but I think he's also going to be fair. I think those are the two things that he brings. He's going to have high expectations for the teachers and the students, but I think he's also a very fair-minded person," Junior Stailey, math teacher, said.

Extra-curricular activities, especially sporting events, remain a popular common ground for all students. The excitement and intensity was very evident in the notorious student section during football and soccer games. Yet another main goal this year is to include everyone at games, especially underclassmen, who tend to be separated from the rest of the student body.

"Every activity that our kids are involved in is important...It's all about being a Homestead Spartan and not just being an individual," Ginder said.

In addition to adding new policies, the principal has also reached out and attempted to connect with students on a personal level.

"I like that he is trying to be close with the students and get on a personal level with us. Talking with the senior painters before football games during the tailgates is proof that he really does care about the students," Bailey said.

Not only is Ginder present at football games, he is also frequently see chatting with students in the halls and visits classrooms regularly.

"I've seen him more than I've seen past principals," Stailey said. "You will know who Mr. Ginder is."

▶ DEAN
CONTINUED FROM 1

(performances)...so I am not just going to see kids in the discipline office, but at other (events) too," Zvers said.

His role will primarily involve focusing on the safety of the student body. This dedication includes attending extracurricular events as well as assisting to control and monitor the security of school.

Jeff Kintz, assistant principal, will be working closely with Zvers throughout the year, as both will deal with discipline related issues.

"He's a very quick learner. He understands school systems and worked in school systems before," Kintz said.

Zvers has found the atmosphere to be welcoming and is excited to work closely with the faculty and students.

"The people are really great, the teachers are great. Everybody has been real friendly and nice helping me," Zvers said.

Though Zvers has not had the opportunity to meet with many students, he hopes his presence at events will help him to assimilate the workings and routine of the school. The veteran administrative members hope to see the students welcome and familiarize with Zvers.

"I would want kids to come up (to him). I'm sure he'd be happy to sit down and just chat with them at events. We're always out and about talking to kids," Kintz said.

Although Zvers works with discipline, he does not want students to feel afraid or threatened by him. So far, the students who have interacted with Zvers have good opinions of him.

"He is really nice and he's actually not strict. He respects students as equals rather than really seeming as an authority figure," Drake White (11) said.

Zvers' past experience as a dean has proven to be important in his shift into the position at a different high school. As he continues to transition into his new role, Zvers, as well as his colleagues, anticipate a promising school year.

"He's a pleasure to have - very educated, very intelligent. We're happy to have him. We're lucky to have him," Kintz said.

A DAY WITH THE DEAN

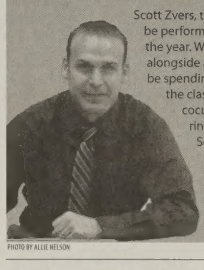

PHOTO BY ALLIE NELSON

Scott Zvers, the new Dean of Homestead, will be performing a plethora of jobs throughout the year. While dealing with disciplinary issues alongside assistant principal, Mr. Kintz, Zvers will be spending a significant amount of time outside the classroom at various extracurricular and cocurricular activities. Before transferring, Zvers was Dean of Canterbury High School. Zvers has also held other roles in education, including a teacher. Zvers hopes to continue on to earn his master's degree and eventually become involved in administrative work.

▶ ATTENDANCE
CONTINUED FROM 1

excused days will be used... However, if (a parent) calls and was unaware that the student wasn't in school, we'll mark it as a truancy and assign appropriate discipline," Kintz said.

Students do not expect the altered policy to become an issue, as the majority of the student body does not abuse their allotted parent excused days.

"The new policy doesn't really affect me, because I don't usually miss school unless I'm sick," Madelyn Kartman (11) said.

Attendance has not been a major problem in the past.

"We're an A rated school and one of the big components of that is attendance. You can't get a high rating in Indiana if you have an attendance issue," Summers said.

Whether this new program will improve attendance overall is unclear. The administration feels students will adapt well to the policy and the transition in the attendance office will be smooth.

The overall goal of this policy is not only to streamline the policy to match other districts, but to encourage students to make attendance a priority, along with education as a whole.

"It is helping keep kids in the classroom. And the teachers really need the kids there. It is very important especially with the rigor of this environment that the students have seat time and that they have the instruction they need to be able to complete their work," Kintz said.

▶3

days allotted for juniors and seniors to visit colleges.

▶ DRUG DOG
CONTINUED FROM 1

are probably aware any property within the walls of the school is legally fair game for random searches, vehicles parked at school are also vulnerable to searches.

Despite rumors of these vehicle sweeps becoming a new policy, unannounced random checks had occurred long before any current student began driving to school. Keeping the checks unannounced maintained the integrity of the system, decreasing the chance for those possessing illegal substances to escape punishment.

While the success rate of vehicle searches is confidential, Thor's detection skills are extremely accurate.

"(If Thor alerts on a vehicle or locker) there is usually something there or something which had recently been there," Jeff Kintz, assistant principal, said.

PHOTO BY ALLIE NELSON

Drug dog Thor relaxes in the general lot. This is Thor's second year as drug dog. This year's general lot will make vehicular drug checks even more random due to the dispersion of cars no longer located in parking lots organized by grade level.

As in previous years, students can expect Thor to be frequently searching the parking lot and sniffing cars on a regular and unpredictable basis.

"The searches are even more random now because there is no designated lot and everyone is parking everywhere," Herriott said.

Student worries these random checks will increase because cars no longer have to be checked for the proper parking pass should be dispelled. The number of drug sweeps in the parking lot is entirely unrelated to the amount of time now freed up due to the removal of the senior lot.

Many students expressed indifference to the searches; "I feel like students should not have drugs on school campus," Gavin Lovvorn (12) said. "(The searches) should not matter."

Once students arrive on school grounds, many rights to the privacy of property are negated in favor of the protection of the general student body.

"As it has been and will always be, driving to school and parking on school property is considered a privilege, and part of this privilege is signing an agreement that your car can be checked by a canine," Herriott said.

▶AP SCORES
CONTINUED FROM 1

Though the percentage of passes and fails has a tendency for fluctuation depending on the administration's philosophies regarding AP classes, there is an upward trajectory in the preparation of students.

"In the past, with principals like Mr. Smith, the philosophy was geared toward rigor no matter what, and so many kids took AP classes simply because they had to. Sometimes our scoring average wasn't as high as it could've been because of some underachievers... The point was to get all of our students in some way acclimated to what they were going to see in college," Shawn Harkness, AP Government teacher, said.

Teachers are noticing an improvement in students' preparation for exams.

"Lately, we've noticed that there are less and less unprepared students, and just this last year my AP government had the highest average scores we've ever had by nearly a half point," Harkness said.

AP students credit many things for the positive trend of the AP program, but most of all they attribute the realization of the benefits of AP classes as a source of motivation to the students.

"The competitive atmosphere with my classmates and the dedicated teachers allow me to take away a huge breadth of knowledge, in addition to the fact that I'll be getting college credit for the class," Hussain Habib (12) said.

> "Our job is to prepare students for college and how (better) do you prepare them for that level of work and difficulty (than) AP classes?"
>
> **AMY HAMILTON**
> *Guidance Counselor*

With more and more students at the school each year, and a higher and higher percentage of them enrolled in AP classes, scores, in both bulk numbers and statistical measures, are bound to go up.

"When I started in 2005 handling the AP testing program, we had maybe 200 students and 400 exams administered," Amy Hamilton, guidance counselor, said. "This year, 651 kids tested, so a little over a fourth of our population tested."

Participating in AP examinations prepares students for college-level classes and tests, a big point of emphasis for the counselors.

"It'd be great if we could get (participation) up to 50 percent... because there was recently an article in the Journal-Gazette about how kids weren't prepared for college," Hamilton said. "Our job is to prepare students for college and how (better) do you prepare them for that level of work and difficulty (than) AP classes?"

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The Spartana is a bi-weekly production of Student Publications: Newspaper at Homestead High School. Its purpose is to enlighten, educate, and entertain. The Spartana has, and may continue to, operate as a limited open forum for the free exchange of ideas.

Staff members support the First Amendment in its entirety and oppose censorship in any form. The content of the paper is determined by the student staff. In cases of potentially controversial material, the Editorial Board will meet to decide the content of the newspaper. The staff will be assisted by the adviser in areas of professional ethics and legalities.

Material that is libelous or obscene as defined by Fort Wayne Newspapers or could cause a substantial and material disruption of the school day as defined by the Supreme Court will not be printed.

Southwest Allen County corporation encourages vigorous treatment of a wide range of subject matter, including controversial issues, and student journalists are free to report and to editorialize on events, ideas, and issues in their high school, community, nation, and world according to Policy Number 4150.

Public input will be accepted from the Homestead community in the form of letters to the editor. Letters must follow standards concerning libel or obscenity. Those that could cause a substantial and material disruption to the school day will not be printed. Letters can be e-mailed to The Spartana at thespartana@gmail.com

foreign language trips, 4

PHOTO BY MARY DISTLER

General lot surpasses low expectations, increases efficiency and reduces conclict between grade levels

BY KYLIE POLING
Opinion Editor

Last year's juniors who are now this year's seniors grumbled about one major change occurring this school year: generalized parking. However, despite this, general parking is a much-needed change and, by enacting it, students will benefit greatly.

Student parking is no longer segregated by grade level and is instead equal-opportunity, meaning any student from any grade level can park in his or her choice of the student-designated lots.

Many of this year's seniors are unhappy they do not get a separated lot exclusive to their elite kin. Students in the sophomore and junior classes, however, do not have to walk from the far lots located near the football fields to enter the building.

To the dismay of seniors, switching the lots to general parking was a change much-needed for students and will benefit everyone in the long-run.

The lots were essentially changed to be general parking by the administration due to the fact it was not time nor cost-effective to monitor the parking lots for violators parked in a lot different than corresponding grade levels.

"The change was prompted because too much time was needed for policing the parking lot and quite honestly the resource of having a police officer in the schools is better used towards keeping (students) safe and being proactive with the canine, as opposed to going out and making sure that people are in the right parking spot or parking lot," Ingrid Herriott, district officer, said.

Over the summer, 150 new spots were added, meaning students were not as pressured to arrive to school early to claim a spot within easy walking distance to the school as they were last year. This is a vast improvement over the previous school year which required timely measures to ensure a decent space.

Because of this problem, many of last year's juniors parked in the senior lot. The administration warned students during last year's announcements, but many ignored said warnings, which resulted in more reason to switch the lots to general parking, according to Herriott.

These first few weeks of the school year was an adjustment period for students. One of the main sources of anxiety for student drivers was finding a parking space, which provided an efficient exit from the lots at the conclusion of the school day.

Since school now has been in session for more than 3 weeks, students are more comfortable with the lots and each lot's respective exits.

"The biggest surprise is how much more available parking there is. You can drive through what used to be the senior lot and there's still relatively good spots available at 7:45 a.m.," Herriott said.

Overall, general parking has proved to be a successful endeavor. After a slow uptake, students are more accepting of the parking change and its practical usage, favoring its efficiency over last year's hassle. General parking is a necessity to the school and, being a beneficial improvement, should remain in use.

twitter take

Sydney Isroff will attempt to capture the most impulsive responses on Twitter.

Question: "Finish this sentence: by the end of this year, I will have..."

@BabyBerghoff - Sarah Berghoff (12) ▶ "friends."

@leee_uhh - Leah Stinson (12) ▶ "a life."

@Karlyhorse - Karly Bailey (12) ▶ "a boyfriend."

@SAy_RAwrrr - Sara Pendrick (11) ▶ "bigger muscles than gorg."

@gosh_Samn_It - Sam Moore (12) ▶ "wasted a year of my life watching Netflix."

@ABSamatteroffact - Abbey Kittaka (12) ▶ "conquered homestead and made people bow down to their true master."

@LEXndthecity - Lexey Denning (12) ▶ "joined a cult of satanists."

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Publications senior tradition erased

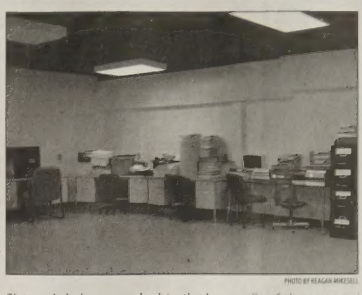

PHOTO BY KEAGAN MIKESELL

Cluttered desks are pushed to the bare walls of the room, which will not be used for an unspecified amount of time.

The news spread like a California wildfire. Texts were sent out, phone calls were made and tweets were posted as student journalists saw the tragedy which occurred over the summer; the yellow room, longtime home to the publications staff, had been painted white.

At first glance, the room doesn't seem like much. It's a small room nestled in the corner of what used to be considered the publications suite; the unfinished, industrial quality of it makes it impractical for classroom use. But these structural qualities are not what makes, or rather, made, the room special. What made the room special were the bright yellow walls covered with inspirational sayings written by Spartana editors from each graduating year, the most recent proudly plastered on the north wall. What made the room special were the posters and stories hung throughout the room, the cluttered whiteboards filled with story ideas, the memories that were made and the traditions that were kept.

Years of award winning, nationally recognized newspapers had been created in that room. Calls to action and mandates for change were dreamt up within those four walls; an air of subtle pride could be felt upon entering. It's impossible to fathom the thousands of hours spent in that room as journalists would work well into the night in order to finish the paper and meet a deadline.

After four years it becomes a part of you. Like a childhood tree house or a secret hiding place, the yellow room was more than just a work space. For many, it was a refuge, a warm and familiar sanctuary in a school that can often feel so cold and disconnected. And now, at the hands of some paint and a brush, the Spartana legacy has been erased.

It's understandable in this year of transitions, there are some changes which have to be made. Whether it's a new attendance policy or stricter dress code, change is a natural process, and change is something everyone will eventually have to deal with.

However, facilitating change should not lead to sacrificing tradition. The yellow room would have been a woeful but understandable loss for the Spartana staff had there been some kind of prior warning or explanation. Multiple staff members have expressed a longing to have even had the opportunity to go in and take pictures of the editors' blocks, just to try and keep the memories alive.

The administration, both members new and old, represents the head of the school. As much as some students hesitate to admit, the administration is what keeps the place running. But what is often forgotten is that while the administration is the head of the school, the students are the heart. While the administration keeps the school running, the students keep the school thriving.

This school is nothing if not for its traditions, and the loss of the yellow room is a painful reminder of just how precious those traditions are.

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Jessica Tebben
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Kylie Poling
Megan Cater

{THE BOTTOM LINE} *Staffers are disappointed over losing the right to leave a mark in the program and to be remembered in the room long after being gone.*

CARTOON BY EMILY SPOTT

Despite rule's positive intentions, policy causes more harm than good

BY KATIE MAHER
Writer

Along with other various changes created by Principal Park Ginder this school year, the decree coined the '10-10 rule' is considered by students to be excusable in theory but simply not pragmatic.

The rule essentially calls for teachers to not sign passes during the first and last 10 minutes of class. This action is to–supposedly–ensure students do not miss crucial information during this time period in class.

"The 10-10 rule does not make sense to me because most of my teachers do not begin the lesson right away," Cassidy Gellar (11) said. "If we leave during the half hour in between, we are missing more (vital information) than we would at the first and last ten minutes."

Theoretically, teachers begin class as soon as the tardy bell rings; however, in practice, the first few minutes of class are usually spent taking attendance while students do bell work.

The new 10-10 regulation causes more disruption to students' schedules than before when there was no restriction.

Many students eagerly anticipate the exact moment when they are allowed to sign a pass which is often observed vocally and to the annoyance of the class.

Considering students cannot use the bathroom for the last ten minutes of class and are not allowed to leave during the first ten minutes of their next class, this totals to a full 26 minutes in which a student must wait to use the restroom.

Students have bathroom passes so they can use the restroom when they need to, and limiting when they can go is unjust.

Since the rules are now enforcing so-called student productivity, having to use the restroom will only add a distraction for students and teachers alike and will thus result in a loss of class time and class efficiency.

"Students will be more mindful of how they're spending their passing period," Tracy Schill, history teacher, said.

In reality, most students do not have time to walk to their class, wherever it may be, and use the restroom. Passing periods themselves are only six mere minutes and not nearly enough time to accomplish necessary actions.

"We [students] do not always have enough time between passing periods to go to the restroom," Fatima Tapia (10) said. "If we do have to use a pass, we should be able to use one at any time we feel like it is necessary."

Although it is widely accepted there are the students who abuse their ability to sign restroom passes, the middle portion of the class is open for students to be exempt from class. Also, the teachers must be aware of elapsed time in the period so that they are not signing an unofficial pass. The situation is a prime example of the whole student body being hurt due to others' mistakes where many are punished for the crimes of the few.

The real solution to solving this issue should be to punish those who ineffectively spend their time while out of class or ask to leave an unnecessary amount of times.

If students are no longer allowed to leave during these 20 minutes, the passing periods should be extended.

The 10-10 rule is not a solution but is in fact another problem in itself and should be reevaluated for efficiency and practicality.

Tony Bennet resigns from election

Publicization of questionable emails triggers decision, opposers relieved

BY COLBY SHOUP
Writer

Although controversial Indiana State Superintendent Tony Bennett was not re-elected in the state election last November, his many failures and missteps are still hurting Indiana schools.

Those affected by Bennett's poor choices made while in office can take solace in the fact the rest of the nation is finally realizing how incompetent he truly is. This is evidenced by Bennett's Aug. 2nd resignation as the Commissioner of Education in Florida.

It is widely believed he resigned because of the recently leaked emails from his administration. These emails talked about manipulating grading scales for a charter school called Christel DeHaan Academy (a school run by a major supporter of his) to make it seem as if the school was more successful than it actually was. Naturally, this caused a huge controversy in Florida.

In a press conference held on Aug. 2, Bennett appeared simultaneously infuriated and saddened by the allegations, but he did not argue them.

"It's obviously politically motivated. Maybe I shouldn't say that. Maybe I should say I learned my lesson and not ascribe motives to things. It's a little hard to do that right now," Bennett said.

It is blatantly clear Bennett did not learn his lesson and will never stop blaming others for his blunders.

Instead of apologizing for lying and cheating, Bennett is simply whining about the fact he got caught.

In a world where Mitt Romney still got a semi decent amount of votes after insulting half of the American public, it is refreshing to see this time around, the public is just as enraged as they should have been.

Florida is still dealing with the mess Bennett left behind, but Indiana is already in the process of fixing the problems in the state education department caused by Bennett. The newly elected Indiana State Superintendent Glenda Ritz supports public schools and has no intention of privatizing them or making them into a business, unlike her predecessor.

Ritz has been working nonstop to improve the way schools in the state operate. It seems as though Bennett has not destroyed the state's education department entirely, but doesn't mean he deserves the forgiveness of anyone who attends or works at the schools he attempted to hurt.

▶40

percent of prep graduates were in univerity remediation, despite Bennett's efforts improve grades and enhance preparation in secondary education.

"Tony Bennett took our education system one step backwards. He was a corrupt politician that increased the ranking of schools that donated to him. He also said private schools were better than public schools which is ridiculous, because he was the superintendent of public schools. He is a man that did not help our educational system at all," Robert McCoy, student council president, said.

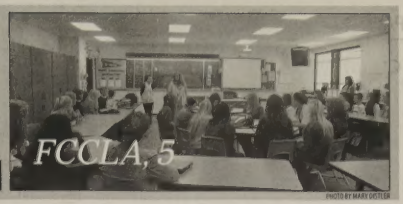


PHOTO BY MARY OESTER

Student site attracts international audience

Junior establishes independent online store, promotes diverse merchandise completely online

Small in stature but big in business, Milly Cai (11) opened "La Petite Papeterie," her online store specializing in stationery products such as decorated pens and animal-shaped pencil cases. This online catalog consists of items primarily from Korea and Japan and has caught the attention of customers across the globe. Only two months after its opening, the shop's future seems bright with its growing success rate.

PHOTO BY REAGAN MIKESELL

Store creator, Milly Cai sells items both premade and handmade on the site, which she created near the start of summer.

Spartana: What does "La Petite Papeterie" mean, and what inspired the name?

Cai: It just means a small stationary shop. I sell stationary, and I'm in French class. There's nothing really interesting that I could've done otherwise.

Spartana: What are some advantages of running a business purely online? What are the disadvantages?

Cai: It's easy and it doesn't take much time, other than coding and HTML for the website. Sometimes, I can't get to the emails, and customers don't reply fast enough for me to get their information. Then the item gets sold out right after, and I have to issue refunds and such. The pictures are hard to do too.

Spartana: What factors did you have to plan out before opening your store?

Cai: I had to figure how much [owning a store] would cost, how much income I would get and how long it would take me to make the website.

Spartana: How long did it take for you to fully prepare "La Petite Papeterie" before officially opening it?

Cai: It took about three days to get everything organized. I saw somebody else's website on [Storenvy.com], and it said you can make your own. I just kind of did it.

Spartana: Have you had any previous experience running a business?

Cai: In eighth grade, there was a Japan earthquake effort, so I did a fundraiser for that. I earned about $280, just off of making bracelets.

Spartana: Do you plan to put your handmade creations online?

Cai: I already have handmade things posted, and they actually sell pretty well. Sometimes it's hard to make things, because you have to get the material and plan the time.

Spartana: How do your parents react to your decision to open a shop?

Cai: My mom forced me to hire her as an accountant, because I was using her Paypal account since I don't have a bank account.

Spartana: What are the most expensive and farthest orders you have received?

Cai: There was an order that was $40, and it was somewhere in Australia. I got an order from France, which I don't even know how to pronounce the address. I got orders from Poland too.

Spartana: What advice do you have for any other students who aspire to open their own online business?

Cai: Get everything planned out, and you have to be organized. If you're not organized, you don't know how much you're spending and how much you're actually getting back.

Spartana: What kind of future do you see for "La Petite Papeterie?"

Cai: I hope it gets more items and more orders from around the world. I hope it gets more viewers too. I have a few sponsors which promote my store on various websites.

Spartana: Where can students reach your catalog?

Cai: [Students] can go to www.kogepan77.storenvy.com.

-William Ngo

PHOTOS BY ALLY HEMBREE

the FOREIGN FRONTIER

Students obtain opportunity to study world culture through hands-on experience

BY AWBREI VACHON
Writer

For many students, taking a foreign language class is just a way of earning high school credits. For others, however, it is a way of getting acquainted with the planet's diversity and beauty.

Over the course of the summer, both Spanish and French students were able to step outside of classroom learning and dive deeper into the languages and cultures of the world. The Spanish students had the opportunity to visit Costa Rica, while the French students were able to experience the beauty of Paris.

"We saw a lot of stuff [in Costa Rica] you wouldn't be able to see in America," Tyler Koteskey (12) said. "[It] was just surreal."

No matter where the destination, planning a trip to another country generally takes about 18 months.

"The students have to have their passports six months beforehand," Leslie Bair, Summit Middle School French teacher, said. "They have to go to the meetings to learn how to behave properly, what the rules are [and] how to stay safe."

The students agreed it was necessary to have an understanding of how different America is compared to other countries.

"Living in the United States, we believe that we receive everything we want," Josh Campbell (12) said. "When we travel to different countries, we see how it's nowhere near similar to [here]."

In places like Costa Rica, families struggle to provide their children with even half of what American schools are able to give their students. While visiting Jaurri, a Costa Rican elementary school, the Spanish students were able to witness this first hand.

"Things are rougher there," Campbell said.

As far as Paris goes, customs are about as modern as America but more conservative.

"We had to learn a lot about what was acceptable," Nana Addo (10) said. "[You want to] get familiar with the rules and be respectful so you don't offend anyone."

Students also took notice of how differently native languages are used by their people.

"I learned to pick up on a lot of French while I was there," Sierra Schwabb (10) said. "It encouraged me to try harder in French class because [I would like to] be able to go there again one day."

Both the Spanish and French students were encouraged to speak in the native tongue as much as possible so they could get an authentic feel for foreign life.

"As language teachers, we try to make our classrooms as real as possible, but at the end of the day, it's not like being in the foreign country," Justin Peeper, Spanish teacher, said.

Aside from assuring the students paid particular attention to the ways and customs of foreign life, teachers also included exciting activities during their eight to nine day visits.

On top of hiking and scavenger hunts, Peeper and Toiyonna Arias, fellow Spanish teacher, planned other adventures such as zip lining at heights of 328 feet, visiting hot springs and visiting an Indian village where students learned how to shoot bows and arrows.

On the large scale of things, however, Adam Newport (11) admits for him, visiting Jaurri was the highlight of the Costa Rican trip.

"We got to play soccer with the kids and we [were able] to give them school supplies for the upcoming year," Newport said. "It was a really neat experience."

Meanwhile, on the other half of the world, Bair and her students were exploring the Eiffel Tower and other ancient works of art.

"Being able to go to the [top of the] Eiffel Tower [and] see over all of Paris was just breathtaking," Schwab said.

1. Students experience Costa Rican culture while holding hands and walking with natives. 2. Erin Johnston (12) learns to shoot with a bow and arrow during a daytime activity. 3. Hannah Miller (12) tastes various exotic foods from the local fresh market in San Jose. 4. Sophia Brown (10) holds on as she zip lines through the trees of the region's tropical forests.

Changes within dance team trigger motivation

Replacement of coach and several dancers sets back practice schedule, forces team to work especially hard

BY HAMNA QURESHI
Writer

Dance team changed quite a bit since last year, with the addition of a new coach and the departure of well-beloved team members. The team had to adapt to these changes and also had to cope with the fact it did not have the summer to practice since there was no coach at the time.

"We got a late start because of the change in coaches," Reagan Huth (11) said. "We usually practice all summer so we are working at a faster pace now."

The team faced yet another challenge with losing last year's seniors as well as some of this year's seniors.

"We lost two seniors from last year's team because they decided to pursue other activities," Huth said.

Despite the various challenges the team faces, it is bouncing back and settling into its new routine. When the old dance coach left, Britney Lombardo was brought in as the new coach, much to the delight of the team. Lombardo held a second round of tryouts to get to know her new team. These tryouts allowed her to see the dancers work in a group setting and also opened up the team to people who did not try out in the spring.

"We have a very positive outlook and are excited for the new opportunity," Victoria Cervoni (11), dancer, said. "Our dance is amazing."

The dancers were excited to work with Lombardo this year and use her expertise in their routines.

"We are all so excited about our new coach. She is super passionate about dance and brings lots of new ideas to the teams," Huth said. "I am really looking forward to dancing with this team. I know we are going to be super close because we all have the same goal."

Enthusiasm about the new coach and this year's team is also coming from the administrative level. Assistant Principal Jennifer Bay says she is eager to see what the upcoming year holds.

"This group has a great energy about them," Bay said. "Mrs. Lombardo and the coaching staff have entered into the position with fresh ideas and are ready to share their talents and passion for the art of dance."

The dance team has been an integral part of the school's arts program for many years. This performing arts class allows students to express themselves artistically and athletically in a team setting. This team is important to not only the dancers, but to the school as well.

"Dance team is one more way for students to be involved in a school activity, and it is one more way for Homestead to be represented positively," Huth said.

Bay has high expectations for the team and wants the team to represent Homestead in the best way possible.

"Just as the past 19 years, I expect greatness," Bay said. "Greatness of the coaches, of the dancers, of the competitive teams and of the programs. Every year we should desire to be a program of people who are dynamic representations of Homestead High School at the state and national levels."

All the girls remains optimistic about the their prospects this year and are eager to spend time with their new coach and teammates.

"Change is never easy, but Mrs. Lombardo is awesome and she is making the transition as easy as possible," Huth said. "[She] has lots of amazing ideas and I am looking forward to working with this team."

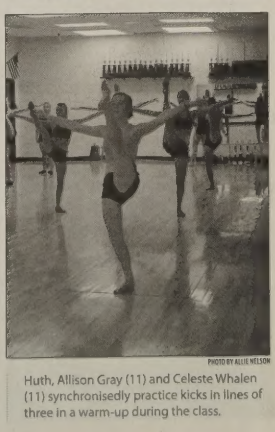


PHOTO BY ALLIE NELSON

Huth, Allison Gray (11) and Celeste Whalen (11) synchronisedly practice kicks in lines of three in a warm-up during the class.

Students must take precaution to be awesome

Students utilize the first few weeks of school to stake their claims in the social hierarchy of high school.

What you do, say and wear is crucial during this time of year.

You should probably stress about this; it's kind of a big deal. Luckily, you don't have to actually be cool to make it to the top.

I have compiled a list of surefire ways to make everyone think you're the coolest kid in school.

1. Get rid of your cell phone. Cell phones are lame. Hand-written letters are the latest fad in communication. Drop an unsigned note in someone's locker. When you're ready to be picked up from the movies, mail your mom the news and wait for three days until she arrives. It's going to be hard, but being cool takes sacrifice and dedication.

2. Teach yourself how to play the nose flute. In case you didn't already know, the nose flute is probably the most out-of-sight instrument in the world. Learning how to play this prestigious instrument will make you 10 times as many friends. Trust me.

3. Never tie your shoes. Tying your shoes shows weakness, and weakness is pretty lame. Instead, let them flop around on the ground as you walk. Tripping yourself is one minor obstacle to face. Tripping someone else with your shoelaces is a great way to get beat up. But being sensational is too important to worry about these hindrances.

JESS SAYIN'

BY JESSICA TEBBEN
Life Editor

4. Laugh differently every time someone tells a joke. Spice things up with a chuckle or a guffaw. Maybe play around with different pitches of cackles. People will probably tell you to shut up, but don't take that as an insult. They're really just jealous of you.

5. Hand-make all of your clothes out of recycled materials. Go scavenging in your neighbors' recycle bins to find old tin cans and failed homework assignments. Make a dress out of them. People will probably think Georgio Armani made it or something.

6. Eat nothing but bananas for lunch. My research shows bananas have vitamins and minerals that make you naturally fabulous.

7. Start a hat collection. Bring a new hat to school every day and auction it off to one of your lucky fans. Everyone in America probably knows your name by this step. You made it. You are now the coolest person in the entire world.

You have now faked your way to the top of the social hierarchy of high school.

Congratulations.

However, if you want to become the actual coolest person ever, here's an exclusive step just for you: be yourself.

It's okay if you don't play the nose flute. It's even okay if you are allergic to bananas. You may not have the school bowing down to you, but you know you're cool. And that's all what really counts in the end.

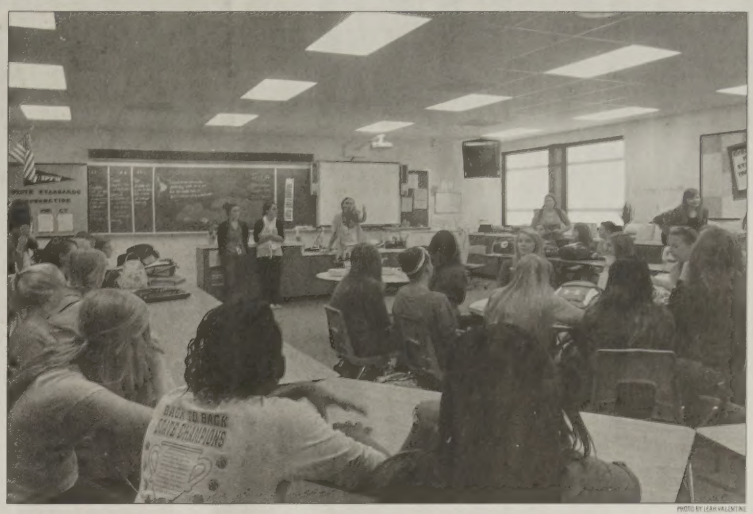


PHOTO BY LEAH VALENTINE

BROADENING THE HORIZONS

Club provides opportunities to explore future career fields

SARAH CAMINO
Writer

When the 7th period bell rings, most students become primarily concerned with rushing for the exits, secondarily concerned with checking social media and only the few and proud brave empty white halls to participate in the array of after-school activities available.

With attendance usually reserved for powerhouses like Key Club, the introductory ice cream social of Family Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA), attracted more than 50 students who crowded into room 100, packing chairs and congregating on the floor with friends.

New this year, FCCLA allows students to explore vocational careers and offers competition opportunities at the district, state and national levels.

"We are rare in that Homestead doesn't have this organization. When I came here there was Hospitality Club, but every high school I'd been at had FCCLA," Tiffany Ham, FCCLA advisor, said.

Now merged with Hospitality Club, FCCLA distinguishes itself by catering to a variety of interests, including fashion, cuisine, housing and interior design, entrepreneurship and event planning. Students who become involved can also expect to use the skills they develop to compete against students from other schools.

"I loved Hospitality club," Ham said. "It only covered a small section of what (family and consumer sciences) can teach. We can teach up to 16 subjects, and hospitality was only hitting one or two. I want to make (FCCLA) more broad so we can reach more students."

Students who fall under this new umbrella view FCCLA as an opportunity to be proactive as they pursue the career they are passionate about.

If it were not for this club, a handful of students would not be given the opportunity to learn about possible occupations.

"You go through life and when you want something so bad, you put everything into it," Maddie Roebel (10) said. "I've put so much into fashion, and I see this as another outlet that I have to get out there, see my options and explore my choices."

> "I personally believe the foundation of society is the family, and when we're able to focus on that, it's great."
>
> **TIFFANY HAM**
> *FCCLA ADVISER*

Even with broader attendance, Ham still hopes to recreate the close-knit atmosphere of Hospitality Club.

"Those kids became so bonded, and I want that same thing with FCCLA," Ham said. "I want the housing, or the interior design, or the textiles people to have that. I want everyone to feel, 'Wait, we have something in common.'"

FCCLA will assemble students who might follow different dreams but share the same drive to achieve them, creating a safe and creative environment open to all.

This interaction, Ham hopes, will create a family environment which extends and reflects the essence of the FACS department.

"I personally believe the foundation of society is the family, and when we're able to focus on that, it's great," Ham said.

Students too, seemed excited about the possibility of meeting new people with common interests.

In addition to career development, students will have the opportunity to use FACS subject areas to contribute to the community through projects which match service opportunities with their aptitudes.

Culinary and animal aficionados already found a project they are engaged in as plans are in the works to bake dog biscuits and deliver them to the local animal shelter.

"I want to be a chef when I grow up, and I'm excited to help people who don't have as much in life as I do," Donovan Holle (9) said. "I'm a huge animal lover too."

Until competition information has been finalized, FCCLA plans to meet every other Thursday after school to develop and implement service projects. FCCLA is just the next torch bearer in the FACS outreach but with a lot more students who can fan the flames.

Students now have a nationally recognized avenue to use their excitement and intensity to develop character and culture, not only within their club or their school, but within their community.

"There's so many things we can do using our talents," Ham said. "That's what I'm excited about: finding passion."

Over 50 students congregated into a room for FCCLA's first meeting of the school year. Unlike a majority of the other clubs in the school, this activity will offer chances to compete at competitions.

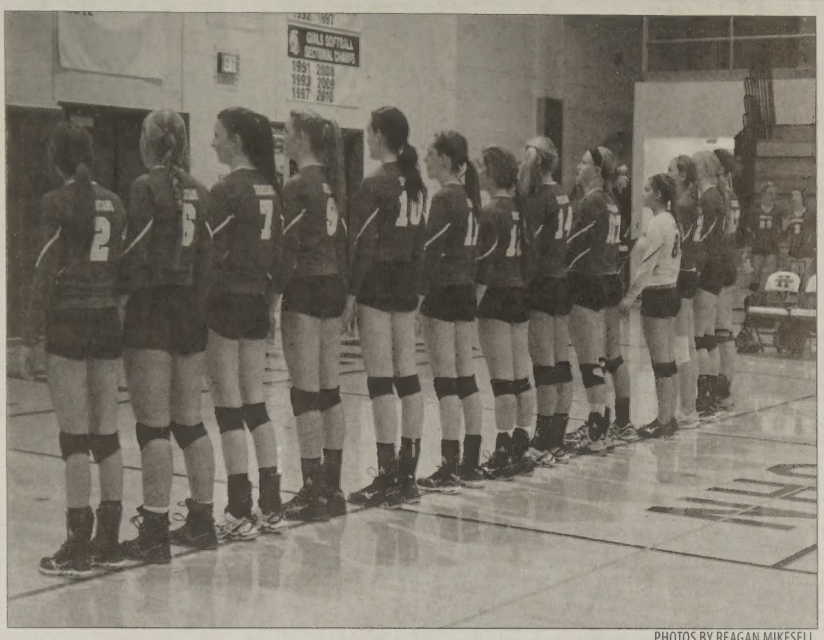
MEET THE NEW TEACHERS

	IF I HAD ONE WISH TO CHANGE THE WORLD IT WOULD BE...	ONE PIECE OF HELPFUL ADVICE FOR STUDENTS...	IF I COULD TRAVEL ANYWHERE AT ALL IT WOULD BE...	MY BIGGEST PET PEEVE IS...	IF I COULD EAT DINNER WITH ANYONE DEAD OR ALIVE...
TISHA BOWMAN	"I wish that everyone could get along with each other. If everyone could just tolerate each other, it would a much easier and better place to live."	"Take advantage of everything that comes your way. You know, try something new. I would always say get out of your box, try something that's uncomfortable, try something new. You never know who you'll meet and where you'll go."	"Well, I have a fear of water, so I've never been out of the United States. So I would love to go anywhere, like Europe or Hawaii. For me, a dream would be to tour Europe for like six months. That would be amazing."	"I have a lot! My biggest pet peeve is when, like when people eat, like when you chew with your mouth open. That drives me absolutely nuts."	"I'm a nerd! I would choose a man... most people don't know his name, but his name is Freidrich Gauss. He is the father of the section of mathematics that I studied."
ROBERT STEVERSON	"I would say that everybody get their basic needs met."	"Be you. Be yourself. Be true."	"I have traveled several different places. I would say the French Riviera for my second time."	"Bad language - like improper use of grammar!"	"I would say Audrey Hepburn. She's classy and she just has really good thoughts. Every quote that I've ever read or heard, I've been like 'Yeah, that resonates with me.'"
EMILY HAGAN	"More acceptance. I think people need to be more accepting of people, especially people who have differences. I think that would just go a long way to fixing the world's problems."	"Have confidence in yourself because if you think highly of yourself, if you have confidence in yourself, you can accomplish more than you originally thought you could."	"Well, since I've been all over the world already, if I could go anywhere I wanted to go, I'd go to the moon. I think that would just be awesome to go to the moon."	"No, not really because I'm pretty thick-skinned so there's not anything that is really a pet peeve of mine."	"Well, this goes back to where I'd like to go. It'd be Neil Armstrong. He was kind of my childhood hero when I was growing up and I think that it would just be so neat to have an opportunity to sit and talk with him."
KEVIN COGDELL	"World Peace."	"Go for it. Do what you want to do."	"Costa Rica, I love the wildlife and the jungle."	"When I'm driving and I let somebody in front of me and they don't even respond with a wave. That annoys me."	"If it's religion, then I'm going to choose Jesus. If it's outside of that I'm going to say Abraham Lincoln. I just think he was a cool guy."
KELLY McCLAIN	"(I would wish) that everybody everyday would do something to benefit somebody else."	"Life isn't about finding yourself, life is about creating yourself." – George Bernard Shaw"	"Peru"	"My worst pet peeve is when people walk and drag their feet. Like in college if I was walking to one of my classes and somebody was walking in front of my dragging their feet, I would literally have to walk in the other direction. I don't know why it drove me crazy."	"Michelle Obama. I really like her Get Up and Move and be active thing for students and schools."

SPORTS

Boy's varsity soccer, 7

PHOTO BY REAGAN MIKESELL



PHOTOS BY REAGAN MIKESELL

Passing THE COMPETITION

Volleyball team continues season 7-1 hoping to improve

By Ethan Yde
Writer

The volleyball team initiated another tenacious round of games, with the accomplishment of two victories already.

The athletes were convinced their teamwork and togetherness will show on the court this year.

"One of the things that I am most excited about is how well the team works together and how they are truly friends and have bonded as a team so well," Kent Mitchell, head coach, said.

The team has worked on its cohesiveness on and off the court and has been practicing together for over two months now.

During tryouts, each player was chosen based on her effort, attitude, strengths and weaknesses. Together as one team, the girls will work with each other, ideally winning all their matches.

Conditioning started early in July, and the official practices began in the middle of August with two a day intensive workouts and training.

Mitchell believes the team will have the competitive edge on its opponents due to its advancements in summer training. The extra practice and team bonding will give the girls a special edge on the court.

"A major aspect that we have been working on in practice is focus, (such as) keeping our focus in the game and a high intensity level as we play. Also we have been working a lot on defense because that's where we had a weakness in the past," Tatum Ellis (10) said.

The coach and athletes understand even though they have started off the season well, there is still much room for improvement in the development of plays, and remaining complacent will never be an option.

It is a highly sought after goal to continue keeping that strong offensive and defensive balance.

In order to improve their athletic style every match, the girls work on analyzing the plays and occurrences in each point. Even after major successes, the players discuss their weaknesses.

"So far we have a 2-0 record, so we are doing pretty well. To improve for games to come, we always look at all that we did in the past matches and decide what we can improve from there," Jenny Redden (12) said.

Redden and the other varsity players are at a level in which they understand constructive criticism is not only important, but it is the key to team development - the key to victory. With their maturity, the entire team will be influenced to follow suit.

Veteran players expected to impact this season include Redden, Olivia Wood (12), Susanne Peters (11) and Jordan Lentz (11).

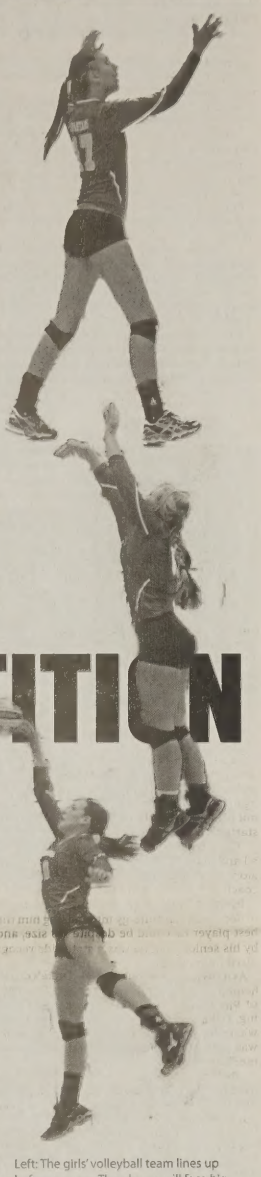
"We'll definitely be looking for a sectional win this year, as well as wins against some of our bigger rivals like Carroll, Bellmont and Huntington North. We are hoping to be on the bus to Ball State this year for the State Championships," Ellis said. "The last game the team participated in was against Wayne where the girls dominated, beating the other team three games in a row with scores of 25-13, 25-10, and 25-16."

"It was a pretty easy game for us," Redden said.

From there, the players traveled to Wapahani for a weekend tournament. Its success from previous games gave the athletes the drive they needed to go three and one and crush the competition.

With the bar set so high, the team anticipates a season filled with dedication, positivity, togetherness and, of course, support on the court in order to make its dream a reality.

"Our coaching staff and players really appreciate all of the students that come out and support us. Volleyball is a fun sport to watch and I hope that we can have more people cheering us on and watching us this season," Mitchell said.



Left: The girls' volleyball team lines up before a game. The players will face big competition like Carroll, Bellmont and Huntington North. Everyone hopes to advance to State Competition. Right column: Players serve, hit and block during one of their matches.

Senior tradition changed

Mixed feelings regarding new senior night

By Tessa Lutz
Social Media Manager

The tradition of the football team's senior night taking place further into the year came to an end.

Senior night, consisting of 21 players this year, was scheduled to be the first home game on Friday, Aug. 30.

In the past, most fall and spring sports end with a special senior dedication to honor all of their graduating athletes.

"It's about the kids. The five weeks doesn't make a big difference," Shawn Harkness, football coach, said.

The switch in date was a more suitable arrangement for this year's athletics.

"(It was) the coaches' preference. We only have four home football games this season," Joe Updegrove, athletic director, said. "I discourage choosing the last game. We generally can anticipate if the weather is going to be good earlier, rather than later in the fall."

The team played Valparaiso High School, a team they had never played against in the past.

"I think it puts more pressure on us to try that much harder," Jared Warner (12), cornerback, said.

Regardless of the timing, the night was still meaningful, and the sentiment was felt.

The bond between players was created through previous seasons, winter and summer practices and training sessions. After spending years together, senior night was able to pay tribute to all the athletes' hard work.

"Most of the seniors work hard all through the winter and through the summer so that bonding has already happened, even before the season," Harkness said.

Other sports, selecting the last game for their senior night, had run into unavoidable issues which interfere with the game in the past.

This change will hopefully eliminate this problem for future games.

"Girls' basketball had (senior night) scheduled for the last game of the season and the game got snowed out. Then the next game available was an away game. If I recall right, that year we did it with the boys which is okay, but it's not the same," Updegrove said.

Although the last home game of the season will be filled with the bittersweet realization of the end of high school, the first home game was filled with similar sentiment.

"Every game is personal. You really can't even describe the emotions you feel going out on that field. You really can't. It will be our last, first home game," Warner said. "(The last home game) is sappier; it is full of more emotion because it is the last time we will ever be on that field," Warner said.

"Step up, and lets play. Everyone wants to win their senior night game" Updegrove said.

The team walked away with a win with the final score of 21-10.

"It's always about the team. The team is your family. We fight for each other on the field," Warner said.

> "Every game is personal. You really cant even describe the emotions you feel going out on that field. You really can't."
>
> **JARED WARNER (12)**
> *Cornerback*

Football tackles all odds

Underclassmen step up to support team

By Adam Swiatkowski
Writer

Football games introduce the new school year, captivating the attention of students every Friday night.

The new seniors are prepared and are backed up by juniors who have been promoted to the varsity team.

Though the ultimate goals are similar, this season is not as customary as previous years.

"The seniors were great last year and [the team] has big shoes to fill," quarterback Logan Ormsby (11) said. "The incoming juniors are ready to step up to the challenge."

The team began its season at Huntington North on Friday, Aug. 23, winning 37-28 and bringing it quickly to the top of the Northeast Hoosier Conference.

The athletes experienced some minor mistakes during the game but will use those as a lesson for future match-ups.

"I definitely think we can play a lot better than Friday and we were pleased to get out of there with the win," Chad Zolman, head coach said. "We had some miscues that need to be taken care of so we can be that team that we expect to be."

Wyatt Butcher (12) and other seniors motivate the team and have been guiding the team in training sessions by deciding what they believe needs to be focused on during practice.

With the departed seniors leaving a void, a new legacy of talent will be defined within the next few games.

"We have a new offense this year, and have some pretty big changes. We've been working on the small details," Butcher says. "These small details are what win or lose a game, not the big things like everybody thinks."

With attention to detail in mind, the boys have high expectations for the entire season. Previous seasons' successes hover over the young men, but all players are ready to tackle the challenge of building on past accomplishments and steadily improving each week.

"We expect to play like in previous years and hope to improve," Ormsby said. "Everyone in the conference expects Homestead to be a good team and our team is trying to live up to the expectation."

> ▶4
> football games planned to be played on the home field this school year.

Expectations are prominent, but the team understands the importance of each game. The NHC consists of Carroll, Norwell, East Noble, Bellmont and others.

"The biggest game is the one right in front of us," Butcher says, "(Last week it was) Valparaiso and next week it will be that game, and we will go as far [into the postseason] as we can go."

Senior Night was also an important part of the early season. Seniors were recognized Friday, Aug. 30 for their commitment to the program at last Friday's home game against Valparaiso, which was won with a score of 21-10. Through persistent determination, the entire team will surely succeed in the season.

"I think the reason we have senior night is because this is the season they will remember and will look back on as older men," Zolman said. "It is for the [players] who have given us 4 years of hard work, so we want to honor them for getting this far."

Lifelong lessons triumph the wins and losses

When my uncle suggested I spend my Sunday night at a local event listening to Mike Ditka speak about his career, I didn't want to give it a second thought. I had no idea who he was or what the speech would be about, and I had no desire to find out.

My uncle went on to tell me Mike Ditka was a former football player and coach, and he was making an appearance at the Neal Delagrange Special Olympics.

The fact he was a coach and played football did not really strike a chord with me. If you know me, you know I have never been a fanatic of any particular sports team or any sport in general for that matter.

I'm aware it is a bit odd I'm the sports editor and not crazy about some aspects of sports. I do enjoy an occasional Sunday football game like the rest of America, but sports are not something I fantasize about in my free time.

After at least ten minutes of begging and a few incentives in the mix, I caved and agreed to go see what this Ditka guy was all about. As life would have it, the speech was great and left me feeling intrigued and motivated. In the short time span the man spoke, he reminisced in his struggles in high school all the way through his finishing days as a coach for the Chicago Bears.

HAIDEN'S HIGHLIGHTS

BY HAIDEN STEINGASS
Sports Editor

Along with the average high school boy, Ditka was passionate about football and went out for the team as soon as fall tryouts were posted.

As a sophomore, he was relatively small for his age and had tremendous reservations in result. He had no idea how he would compete against the athletes twice his size, but it was not in Ditka's blood to give up before he even started.

Once tryouts rolled around, he gave it his all and made the team. This accomplishment alone was enough to keep him going, and his coach noticed the spark he carried with him.

In short, Ditka's high school coach put a lot of dedication and energy into making him the best player he could be despite his size, and by his senior year, he was a statewide recognized football star.

As if his glory was not enough, Ditka's coach helped land the athlete a place on University of Pittsburgh's football team.After graduating, Ditka was drafted to the Chicago Bears where he played for six years. From there he was part of the Philadelphia Eagles for two more uneventful years.

By then, Ditka was convinced that he had used up every opportunity his football career had to offer and was ready to retire. It was not until shortly after he got a call from Tom Landry, the Dallas Cowboys' coach, that he did a complete 180.

Landry told him, "I don't know if you're wanting to play football, but I just traded for you."

> "Playing a sport is more than a win or a loss; it's the strength, integrity and life altering opportunities that come out of it."
>
> **HAIDEN STEINGASS**

These words left a huge decision for Ditka to make.

He ended up changing his original plan and joining the Cowboys the following summer. To finish off his already outstanding career, Ditka was hired as the assistant coach of the Cowboys for a few years and was then promoted to head coach of the Bears.

I would say that Ditka's life was the gift that never stopped giving. Like him, everyone has dreams and the ability to chase after them. All it took for Ditka was an open mind and a high school coach who believed in him. From there, he achieved everything he fantasized about as a teenager.

Even though sports are not my life and I do not keep up with the latest statistics, I know that Ditka's speech will have a lasting impact on me.

I have reconsidered my preconceived notion of athleticism as not just a game with two possible outcomes.

Playing a sport is more than a win or a loss; it's the strength, integrity and life altering opportunities that come out of it.

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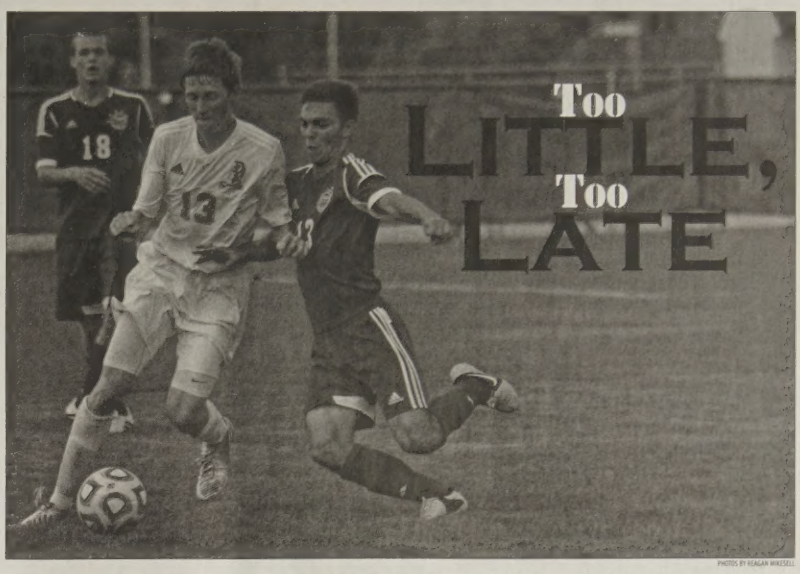

Too LITTLE, Too LATE

PHOTOS BY REAGAN WAKSELL

Strong rival teams meet up in a highly anticipated match

BY HAIDEN STEINGASS
Sports Editor

Top: Alex Sheppard (10) plays head to head with a player from Canterbury, in hopes of gaining a goal for the team. Bottom: Natu Mccarthy (12) hypes up the boys before the big game. Mccarthy joined the soccer team his freshman year and continued to play since.

The longstanding Canterbury rivalry was yet again fueled by the resilient aspirations of this year's boys' soccer team.

"Canterbury has always been our rival," Natu Mccarthy (12) said. "It brings a lot of attention to some of the best players in the city. A lot of people are passionate about the game. It has always been a game to look forward to year after year."

Both schools were reflected to have two of the highest rated soccer programs in the area, which drove the players to such extreme competitiveness year after year.

The regular season essentially revolves around the results of the one time opportunity to be victorious against the opposing team.

"The rivalry is heightened by both of the schools. Every year Homestead has made it to regionals, but the ultimate goal for this year is to make it to state," Mike Houser, head couch, said. "Homestead and Canterbury have provided some of the best high school soccer games in Fort Wayne."

Similarly to the team's forerunners, the athletes practiced since mid-summer and trained daily on their weaknesses in order to perform at the peak of their potential.

"I've been training people in the gym, and (we have been looking to improve) our structure on the field, finishing and our intensity throughout the game," Mccarthy said.

The Canterbury game never failed to leave an enduring legacy on the school's reputation, but in the past few years, the team had not left the field with a victory.

Including last weekend's game, the losing streak put a damper on the team's confidence and their large fan base.

"We (were) expecting a competitive game and an emotional game, but we (were) expecting a good result," Mccarthy said.

Last year, the team lost to Canterbury in an intense overtime with a score of 2-1.

Likewise, this year's game resulted in a score of 1-0, where the both halves challenged each player's performance and perseverance.

During the first half, the boys were looking to shake off any last nerves and score as soon as possible.

Among the players, they formed a solid defense including Travis Wyss (12), Mccarthy, Alex Kunce (12), and Nick Anderson (11). After the first 40 minutes, leading player Anthony Jimenez (12) entered the game which led his teammates to be hopeful for their long sought after outcome.

> "No matter what school you root for, both fan-bases would agree that there are very few schools that create such local electricity like these two schools do when they visit each other's fields."
>
> **MIKE HOUSER**
> *Head Couch*

After nearly ten attempted shots, the team was not able to recover after the opposing team scored once in the first half.

"We (would have felt) on top of the world," goalie, Lincoln Black (12) said. "It's a huge game. We're just trying to beat our rivals."

Despite the disappointing loss, the team may have a chance to redeem themselves against Canterbury further into the postseason.

Until then, previous assistant coach, Houser plans to make a smooth transition from last year's head coach and lead the team to their ultimate goal of advancing to state finals.

"No matter what school you root for, both fan-bases would agree that there are very few schools that create such local electricity like these two schools do when they visit each other's fields," Houser said.

PUBLIC ENEMIES

1-0 score gave Canterbury the win at the Aug. 31 match.

4.8 miles are between the school and Canterbury High School.

This week, an Indiana Soccer Coaches Association poll asked to rank teams throughout the state. Canterbury ranked **7**

The Indiana Soccer Coaches Association poll ranked the school's boys' varsity soccer team **19**

Tennis players look to smash their season

Boys' varsity team prepares for tough competitors throughout area

BY AUSTEN CUMMINGS
Writer

The strength and experience from last year's boys' tennis team was carried over to this season.

"I am very optimistic about this year. Our team has depth and we are looking good," Mitch Gray (12), team captain, said.

The varsity team consists of two freshman, four juniors and three seniors.

"My roles of being team captain are to pretty much keep the team under control. I bring the team together and get them pumped up before matches," Gray said.

With a legacy to uphold, Gray and his teammates anticipate games which had a challenging demeanor in the past.

"Carroll or Canterbury has always been the tougher teams to play. We even lost in the conference game to Carroll last year," Gray said.

Despite last year's losses, the team's predecessors obtained the conference championship title, which leads Coach Jim Shull to believe the athletes can repeat such success.

Last weekend, the boys traveled to Indianapolis to compete against Park Tudor.

At Park Tudor, the team's first, second and third singles advanced to finals and finished in second.

"Down in Indy there are a lot of good teams, and (it was) a good competition," Jordan Andrews (9) said.

As the season is still in its beginning, the team has yet to determine how far into the postseason it expects to go. Fortunately, with such a diverse set of players, there is room for much improvement and potential growth.

"I am very excited for this season, we have a good looking team," Shull said.

Andrews had the honor of playing on varsity team as a freshman.

"I feel pretty good (about this year) because I have been playing most of my life. I have been (in tennis) since I was three," Andrews said.

Moreover, another addition to the tennis program was the tennis courts, which were placed across the street from the school.

With the courts as an incentive, the new team is confident in its ability to stay driven and bring home another honorable title as the season progresses.

"The team looks better than last year and we are hoping to have great season," Andrews said.

PHOTO BY PRISCILLA LIN

Ross Johnson (12) serves to a fellow player during a practice sesssion. Johnson played with the tennis team his entire high school career.

CATCH ME IF YOU RAN

BY ALLIE NELSON

The thought of getting up and excercising used to discourage students from going out for a jog as they imagined the impending exhaustion. Now, however, people are suddenly racing for a spot in these modernized running events; competitive or non-competitive, colorful or muddy, long or short. On top of fitness maintenence, running has become a fine source of personal leisure.

COLOR ME MAYBE

With a flick of the wrist and a wave of the flag, exercise became as technicolor as the cornstarch blanketing 5K-ers before running 3.1 miles for the local Color Me Rad event, Saturday, Aug. 24. The shower of color not only transformed the once white shirts into a rainbow masterpiece, but also signaled the start of the race.

"(The dye) was very thick and it made it hard to see in front of you, but still I wanted color to be thrown at me so I could get it on my shirt," Morgan McKay (11) said.

Color Me Rad, accurately named by its focus, can only be described by its participants as colorful, as the chalk dye overshadowed the athletic side of the event.

"My favorite part was having hydrants filled with (dye)," Madi Mick (9) said. "You'd just be sprayed with it at different stages along the way without being able to see through the big clouds of color.. At one point my friend and I literally laid down and rolled through the ground in color."

Although the 8,300 participants were separated into several heats, the widespread participation turned the run into more of an event than a workout.

"From what I'd heard about it, it was supposed to be a fun atmosphere," McKay said. "The whole comradery between everyone made it enjoyable since it was on a road and we ran down and ran back and there were people giving out high-fives throughout."

As fitness motivators, the Color Me Rad proved converting a tee shirt canvas into a painting and, of course, enjoying yourself along the way, turn running into a little less of a chore and little more of an expression.

"Before (training) I used to really dislike running. I hated even running a mile," McKay said. "Now I realize it's made me stronger and healthier."

Left: Runners pose after finishing the Color Me Rad 5K run, near the Allen County Memorial Coliseum. Right, Students coat each other with neon, powdered color.

Clenching protein bars and water jugs in each fist, the half-marathoners were off. The runners had taken the first step out of the thousands to go along the 13.1 mile trek.

On Sunday, Aug. 25 at 6:30 a.m. Nick Van Burk (12) individually prepared for a test of strength which would continue until crossing the finish line hours later, when he completed the distance with a shorter time than any other runner within the age group.

"I did well in my age division, but compared to the other people, I didn't do as well as I wanted to so I am going to run another one I think in September. (Running alone) was a little harder because you kind of have to motivate yourself instead of staying at a pace with a group of other people," Van Burk said.

Half-marathons and marathons are more common now than in the past, as more and more people are trying to achieve fitness and experience success in sports measuring endurance. Knowledge on training methods increased as well, making completion in shorter amounts of time more of a reality than an exaggeration.

"I started running more and I needed something to, like, give me a point to running because if you just continue to run it kind of gets boring," Van Burk said. "I just signed up for (the half-marathon) without thinking about it just to force myself to do it. I never used to run until I got into fitness and now I enjoy it."

WE'RE HALFWAY THERE

2 quarts of water are lost from the body per hour of excercise.

50 percent more calories are burned when running, compared to walking.

1 billion pairs of running shoes are sold yearly throughout the world.

While running, endorphins fill the brain section responsible for good feelings, creating the runner's high.

RITTEN' IN THE STARS

Kicking, pedaling and sprinting unite into one sport for triathletes. As unrelated as the activities may seem, there is one cumulative time which ultimately determines the finish.

After competing in an event in Milwaukee, WI, on Sunday, Aug. 11, Patrick Rittenhouse (12) qualified for nationals with a time of 1:17:41.

"I got started with (triathlons) through my brother, Aaron," Rittenhouse said. "He did them and I have a lot of background in running and swimming, so I did one freshman year and have been doing them every year since."

Although Rittenhouse was restricted by Indiana High School Athletic Association from competing in further events beyond those of the cross country team, Rittenhouse continued to train through practices. Training, the most time-consuming aspect of competing, is essential in order to prepare and simulate what the actual event will entail.

"I do all (triathlons) in the summer so I have cross country practice during the day and a lot of my training is running," Rittenhouse said. "Every day I will try to get in a swim or bike workout if time allows. The week before, what I did was a taper where you don't go as hardcore as you do during training to keep your muscles loose and relaxed so you are ready to perform the best."

The motive for these races is often competing to win; however, other features of racing entice athletes over qualifying for times and passing goals.

"The atmosphere that the race holds is neat," Rittenhouse said. "Everybody is kind to each other and I enjoy all sports because they are lifetime sports. You can be any age, you can be really good or really bad. All that matters is that you're out there and that's what I really enjoy."

the SPARTANA

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The annual Homecoming dance has been replaced with a new tailgating tradition before the football game. 1

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Students take to social media in order to vent frustrations towards the school and against certain members of the faculty. 5

▶SPORTS
Led by a group of five strong seniors, the girls golf team advances through their season with impressive and notable victories. 7

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Under new leadership, the students section hopes to grow and engage more students in their endeavor to cheer on all athletic teams. 8

Friday, September 20, 2013 | A 2009 Pacemaker Winner | Homestead High School's News Source Since 1969

Counselors establish online class deadline

Seniors to be put in regular gym class if online final left incomplete by end of semester

PHOTO BY ALLIE NELSON

Pamphlets for online classes are necessary for all students wishing to take online gym or health. Specific information regarding the online courses can be found in student services.

By Katie Dunlap
News Editor

Because many members of the Class of 2013 almost did not complete their gym (PE) credits, this year seniors taking online gym must finish the program by the end of the first semester, or they will be placed in a gym class for the second semester.

"Anything that they are planning on taking online must be done by the end of first semester, otherwise we are going to place them in that class second semester to make certain that they can participate in graduation. Last year was the first class where students could not participate if they did not have all credits in place," Jerry Anderson, guidance counselor, said.

Many students do not realize how long online gym programs take to complete. Depending on the program, these classes could take anywhere from 12 to 16 weeks to finish. Senior students that were planning on taking online gym to satisfy their credits no longer have enough time to complete the course by the end of the first semester.

"These online PE programs take sometimes a minimum of 12 weeks, and you can't just cram it all in in the last four weeks of school," Amy Hamilton, guidance counselor, said. "So what we've decided, I think as a department, is that if a student doesn't have their online PE done by first semester, then we need to put it back in second semester."

> "Last year there was such an influx of online PE second semester that we found ourselves under this enormous pressure."
>
> **AMY HAMILTON**
> *Guidance Counselor*

If students do not complete their gym credits, they are at the risk of not being able to graduate. Some decide to participate in an online gym course, but because of the length of these programs, many are in danger of not finishing if they do not start in time.

"Last year we had some seniors

▶ SEE 'GYM,' PAGE 2

PHOTO BY REAGAN MIRESELL

Homecoming dance to be replaced with pre-game tailgate

By Katie Dunlap
News Editor

Instead of the traditional homecoming dance following the football game against Dekalb on Friday Sept. 27, Student Government has altered the plans to feature a school-wide tailgate prior to the game in the sophomore parking lot.

▶15
dollars per shirt in order to get access to all food and games available at the tailgate.

"This year, we're (changing the plans) and doing a tailgate before the football game. It will start at 4:30 and go until around 6:45. We're hoping to get inflatables, footballs, and corn hole for students to play around. There will also be food trucks," Stephanie Wiley, student government adviser, said.

Student government's decision to make changes to the homecoming custom originated due to a trend of disproportionate attendance at the dances.

"We're excited to do something different. In past years, we weren't getting the population at the dances. With the new principal, we thought it was a great time to make changes and try something new," Ivy Kurgan(12), Vice President, said.

The plans for the homecoming football game will remain the same as years prior. At half time, the king and queen of the homecoming court will be crowned as usual, but there will not be any events after the game.

"We will still have Spirit Week leading up to homecoming and the procedure during the

▶ SEE 'HOMECOMING,' PAGE 2

Nav 101 put to rest

By Mallory McCauley
Writer

The college and career preparation program Nav 101 has been cut from the advisory curriculum, though the program will be replaced in the future with Indiana Career Explorer.

In July, administrators were notified that budget cuts caused Nav 101 to revoke its services as of Aug. 31. Envictus, the company that created Nav 101, could no longer maintain its necessary resources to fund the program when Washington State, its largest contract, became unable to maintain a partnership with Envictus.

"(Nav 101's) main funding came from the entire state of Washington, and when they lost that from budget cuts, they felt that they couldn't provide the program to the same level anymore," Barbara Csicsko, smaller learning communities'

▶ SEE 'NAV 101,' PAGE 2

BRIEFS

PSAT DAY
Current sophomore and junior students will be taking the PSAT on Oct. 16. Students are highly encouraged to properly prepare for this test as a high score can guarantee multiple future opportunities. Students with an especially high score have the opportunity to receive Nation Merit Scholarships. Additionally, high PSAT scores automatically qualify students to take several dual credit marketing, computer programming, business, communications and psychology classes. These dual credit classes can in turn be used towards an academic honors diploma and will count as college credit recognized by many major universities.

VISITING COLLEGES
Colleges will be sending admissions representatives to visit with prospective students in upcoming days. Students need to register in student services and pick up a college visitation pass at least one day prior to the visit they wish to attend. Today, Sept. 20, an admissions representative from Loyola University will be holding a meeting to meet with interested students. Other college admission representatives include those from Vanderbilt, Northwestern and Notre Dame.

SADD CHICKEN FUNDRAISER
The SADD Club will be selling Nelson's Chicken from 2:30-6:30 Sept. 27 in the southeast corner of the staff parking lot. The chicken sale will take place the same day as the homecoming football game and tailgate. Proceeds will benefit the SADD organization.

Elementary schools to go through redistricting

Student population imbalances catalyze elementary redistricting

By Megan Cater
Copy Editor

Due to an imbalance in the number of students in Southwest Allen County elementary schools, the school board has decided to redistrict.

According to the SACS website, the redistricting goals are "to balance school populations and alleviate overcrowding in grades K-8, to look at future population growth areas, to keep area neighborhoods intact and to be good stewards of all taxpayer funds."

While there are some elementary schools that are under capacity, other schools are almost at full capacity.

"Covington Elementary is already at (more than) 90(...) percent occupancy," Steve Yager, superintendent, said. "The attendance boundary for Deer Ridge is filled with a lot of patrons who don't have kids in elementary schools anymore, so the enrollment at Deer Ridge over a five year period is declining."

Because of the growth of neighborhoods around Covington and Woodside, more and more students are attending these schools.

"When you look at the areas where we are growing and

▶ SEE 'REDISTRICT,' PAGE 2

PHOTO BY WILLIAM NGO

Members of the school board discuss current issues at their latest meeting on Sept. 18. As the plans for redistricting progress, the final decisions and approval of all plans will ultimately be up to the school board.

Maintenance proposal plans progress

School board votes it necessary to replace current football turf, track

By Ian McKenzie
Copy Editor

One of the school's most prized sporting venues, Dave S. Walters Stadium, home to the autumnal gatherings of football and band performances, may be getting necessary renovations in the near future.

Part of a series of five maintenance proposals to be rolled out throughout the district, the "Co-Curricular" project is being pursued within the Southwest Allen County Schools (SACS) Board, and the biggest change potentially coming from it would be getting new turf for the football field, solving subfield flooding issues that in turn cause occasional depressions in the field. In addition to that, the entrance and concession stands may be getting important facelifts to dress up and modernize the slightly plain, antiquated edifice to the stadium.

The plan also calls to transpose the old football turf onto the band field area, which perennially undergoes the carnage of band season.

"There is definitely a need for this. We have trouble because the

▶ SEE 'MAINTENANCE,' PAGE 2

THE BREAKDOWN

▶7,800,000	▶1,700,000	▶5
dollar estimated cost for all maintenance projects proposed	dollar estimated cost for each individual project proposed	maintenance proposals throughout the district

▶MAINTENANCE CONTINUED FROM 1

PHOTO BY WILLIAM NGO

As part of the maintenance plan, the turf removed from the football field would be used to replace the current worn out grass on the marching band practice field.

practice field gets so ragged and patchy during the season," Erik Overdahl (12), band member, said. "A turf of our own would allow us to practice in an environment much closer to what we perform in."

In addition to turf changes, the track would get reconditioned as well. Years upon years of spikes, cleats and everything in between poking and prodding the surface have left it shoddy and worn down in spots.

Though this "Co-curricular" project headlines the maintenance proposals in general, they are just a part of the school system-wide plan to address a number of upkeep needs. Of those pertaining to Homestead, there would be renovations involving roofing and brickwork upgrades throughout the building and a new sound system for the main gym, as well as a security system overhaul involving the cameras and radios used throughout the building for monitoring and communication.

In terms of cost, the school board has a plan set up that will purportedly prevent all but minor increases in school system debt over a relatively short period of time.

"We would actually do a lease to finance all of these projects. The total hard cost would be about 7 to 7.8 million dollars, with no project exceeding more than 1.7 million dollars apiece. Jim Coplen, business manager for SACS, said.

In addition to this cost, we have other financing fees, legal fees and professional fees that would add on to that. But we would plan to finance that over a short term, hopefully ending in 2019, in about six years."

The actual plan to finance is one of transparency and feasibility.

"How we would do that is that we have some debt in the district that would be falling off, so we would add these costs in the areas where it is falling off (...) It would just add some additional debt during that period, but none higher than what we have now," Coplen said.

As far as a time-table for execution of the plans goes, it depends mainly on how quickly the plans are given the go-ahead to installation and the practicalities of the installation. For now, the SACS School Board gathers information and prepares to move into the final steps of preparation for the extensive upgrades to the high school's facilities.

"We voted to commit to move forward with these five projects. What that means is that when we get more details, quotes or estimates we will compare them to the rough quotes at the beginning and if they match up we'll move forward into planning a timeframe for the execution of these projects," Meagan Milne, SACS School Board member, said.

▶HOMECOMING CONTINUED FROM 1

game will not change," said Wiley.

As in years past, students will get into the homecoming tailgate by purchasing a shirt during their lunch period or in Mrs. Wiley's room. This year, the shirts will cost around $15, as this price will include both the shirt and the cost of the food trucks. Since the student section theme for the football game is Army, the shirts will be dark green with black lettering.

"The (cost of the) food trucks will come with the price of the shirt, (so the price has been slightly increased). There will be a few trucks, so students have different options," Kurgan said.

Student government's goal is to get more upperclassmen involved and to play towards everyone's interests. The tailgate will be similar to those of the student section, but on a larger scale.

"Attendance will go up this year especially with upperclassmen, since the seniors are (more involved with) painting and also planning homecoming. This change is geared towards getting everyone involved and opening it up to a wider variety of people," Kurgan said.

Members of student government expect this plan to garner people's interest because the school has never participated in such an activity.

"It will be a good change. Since it's a new idea, it will catch people's attention. They'll be intrigued to see what's going on," Shelby Harkness(11) said.

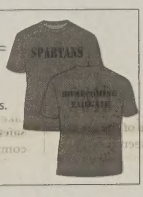
Students plan to attend the tailgate and are excited for the change in plans this year. This change has already seemed to encourage more people to get involved.

"The tailgate (idea) is so much better because nobody goes to the dance. It will be more fun and more people will want to go," Brett Stroud(12) said.

Student government expects a successful Spirit Week followed by a fun night full of friends and football. Reinventing the concept of homecoming is expected to attract more students and improve attendance overall.

"It will be a great chance for students to hang out with their friends and enjoy (being together)," Wiley said.

GEARING UP



This year's homecoming shirts will follow the camo student section theme. Shirts will be $15, a $5 increase from the cost of shirts in previous years. This year, the shirt price will include the cost of food trucks at the pre-game tailgate. The shirt will be army green with black writing.

▶REDISTRICTING CONTINUED FROM 1

where homes are being built, it's our area(...) we're not full yet but we will be soon," Fred Graf, Covington principal, said. "By (the) nature of our school, we are a larger school. We have five or six classes per grade whereas the other schools have three to four classes per grade."

While there are no finalized details regarding where there will be redistricting, Yager and the school board are working to ensure an easy transition.

"Our goal is to keep neighborhoods together," Yager said. "We don't want people who are neighbors and friends within any individual neighborhood to have to split up and go to different schools."

The recent news of redistricting has sparked conversation in parents of elementary students.

"I think that it is probably a very necessary thing(...) Redistricting is the least disruptive to the system as a whole," Holly Wenning, English teacher and parent of a child in the district, said. "It (is) just another way that my child can build character."

The Southwest district includes Covington, Deer Ridge, Aboite, Lafayette Meadows, Whispering Meadows and Haverhill Elementary. However, the number of students needs to be balanced in each school to ensure productive learning.

"I love the kids that come to my school and I don't want to lose any of them, but yet I know it's the smart move for rebalancing the schools. Being in Southwest, we have six incredible elementary schools," Graf said.

Although there have been no final decisions yet, parents and the community can expect to see changes in the beginning of the 2014-15 school year.

"We look to have recommendations in front of the board hopefully after the first of the year, if not before. The recommendation would be to make the switch for the fall of 2014," Yager said.

Yager and the current school board members are brainstorming ways to balance the schools while taking the tax payers into consideration.

"We have to be very cognizant of all our taxpayers in Southwest Allen County Schools(...) We have to take a look and try to balance the schools so that were not expending tax payer dollars to add on to any elementary school in the district when there is space in other buildings in the district," Yager said.

Changes in boundary lines will allow elementary schools to reach their full potential with each student.

"Our patrons really support our schools and they do appreciate the work we do in our schools," Yager said. "We have to honor their trust and be worthy of their trust and we do the best we can with each and every tax dollar."

PHOTO BY MEGAN BUTLER

Covington Elementary will be one of the six schools affected by redistricting. Covington, one of the largest elementary schools in the district, continues to grow. Structurally, Covington is also larger than the other schools; it is built to be twice the size of the other buildings.

▶NAV 101 CONTINUED FROM 1

coordinator, said.

With a gap now exposed in the advisory curriculum, a new interactive site, Indiana Career Explorer, will be used as a replacement. Although Indiana Career Explorer and Nav 101 possess analogous fundamentals, administrators and teachers predict students will prefer Indiana Career Explorer over Nav 101.

"I think (Indiana Career Explorer) is a huge improvement over Nav 101(...) (using Indiana Career Explorer) will be time well spent because it's going to help guide (students) on a path to their passion," Holly Wenning, English teacher, said.

Nav 101 featured five lessons that were mandatory to be completed by the end of the school year. Many students dreaded Thursdays purely due to the lack of desire to click through 100 slides and then follow up with a quiz immediately after.

"(Nav 101) wasn't of much use because it mentioned information that is not applicable to me, and I wasn't engaged. I hated how it took so long to do, and on top of that, we had to do required quizzes which were a waste of time," Fahad Hasnain (11) said.

This aversion to Nav 101 was even evident to teachers as their students continually displayed a disinterest towards the activity. With this being the case, some of the staff believes this cut could be positive for the students.

"I know my advisory students didn't feel like (Nav 101) was very engaging, and they just flipped through the slides so it wasn't very effective. If (Nav 101) wasn't effective, then it's a good thing (it) was cut," Wenning said.

Indiana Career Explorer is a free program provided by the state to help guide students in discovering the career path both best suited for their skills and their passions.

"(Indiana Career Explorer) is easier to use and more interactive," Csisko said.

Rather than being driven purely towards teaching students, Indiana Career Explorer is set toward engaging students and helping them to identify and pursue their aspirations.

"Student interest will drive where they go. Their own interests will drive how they use (Indiana Career explorer)," Wenning said.

A faculty meeting took place Aug. 12 with 40 to 50 teachers in order to introduce them to the new program. With the steps of establishing the use of Indiana Career Explorer in advisory set in motion, administration continues to hold high hopes.

"For the last month that I've looked at this, I've been excited the entire time," Csicsko said.

> "(Nav 101) wasn't of much use because it mentioned information that is not applicable to me, and I wasn't engaged."
>
> **FAHAD HASNAIN (11)**
> *Former Nav 101 User*

HOMESTEAD DEBUNKED

Myth: Yoga pants will be banned as the administration feels they are inappropriate for girls to wear to school.

Status: False - The dress code will not be altered regarding the policy on yoga pants. However, banning the popular pants could come up later this school year or next year.

"We are not going to make changes this year unless it becomes an issue, but that does not mean there won't be changes next year," Park Ginder, principal, said.

The administration will have discussions concerning the handbook during the second semester of the school year, and if changes are to be made regarding the dress code, they will be made then. The banning of yoga pants is very controversial with students, but the concerns that staff members have over whether or not they are an appropriate option for school could outweigh student opinion in the future.

The idea that yoga pants would be banned originated because they were not allowed at schools that Ginder has worked at in the past. Also, other schools in the district have decided to ban yoga pants. However, these factors do not play into whether or not the pants will be prohibited.

"A lot of students tend to(...) get confused and (think that changes are being made to follow) some of our other schools' dress codes," Susan Summers, assistant principal, said. "Students tend to go off of what they have heard about (dress code) from the other schools."

For now, administration will concentrate on dress code violations that are already clearly stated.

"We are going to enforce the handbook the way it's written," Ginder said.

▶GYM CONTINUED FROM 1

who took too long to begin taking PE, and because it takes approximately 16 weeks to get through it, they ran out of time. Because of that, we're expecting all seniors to have all of their credits no matter what," Anderson said.

This new constraint is a means of making sure that every student fulfills their basic requirements in a timely manner. Because every senior is required to finish online gym first semester or take the class second semester, the stress of finishing will be alleviated.

"Last year there was such an influx of online PE second semester that we found ourselves under this enormous pressure because the graduation requirements now state that you have to have all 40 credits before you can walk," Hamilton said.

Online gym has become a popular option as it gives students more openings in their schedules to fill with electives.

"The importance (of online gym) would be for a lot of kids if they want to take electives (...) that allows them a little flexibility in their regular school day schedule," Tiernon, PE teacher, said.

Students are upset that they were not informed of this change at an earlier date, as many will now be required to take a second semester gym class.

"I understand why they changed it, but they have to tell people about it. I had no idea. It wouldn't be a problem if they told us about it last year, it's a valid concern about people not having it done on time. They should have told us when we signed up for it," Laura Lauderman (12) said.

These time restraints have been implemented in order to ease the minds of both senior students and guidance counselors. Because of the risk that students will be prohibited from walking at the graduation ceremony, counselors felt that this change was a way to take the pressure of finishing online gym programs off.

"Our goal is not to punish the student(...) it's just to motivate you to get this done. The PE (class) is such a particular issue because there is a certain number of weeks (of) commitment. Students have to realize that they are in jeopardy of not graduating if they don't get it done," Hamilton said.

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Staff members support the First Amendment in its entirety and oppose censorship in any form. The content of the paper is determined by the student staff. In cases of potentially controversial material, the Editorial Board will meet to decide the content of the newspaper. The staff will be assisted by the adviser in areas of professional ethics and legalities.

Material that is libelous or obscene as defined by Fort Wayne Newspapers or could cause a substantial and material disruption of the school day as defined by the Supreme Court will not be printed.

Southwest Allen County corporation encourages vigorous treatment of a wide range of subject matter, including controversial issues, and student journalists are free to report and to editorialize on events, ideas, and issues in their high school, community, nation, and world according to Policy Number 4150.

Public input will be accepted from the Homestead community in the form of letters to the editor. Letters must follow standards concerning libel or obscenity. Those that could cause a substantial and material disruption to the school day will not be printed. Letters can be e-mailed to The Spartana at thespartana@gmail.com

OPINION

Tardy policy criticized despite positive intentions

As the final tardy bell sounds, students begin to file into their seats and settle into their desks, shuffling papers and putting names on finished homework assignments. The class goes carries on like any other until the all too familiar administrator voice comes over the PA system, telling any students still in the halls to report to discipline and for teachers to not allow tardy students into their classrooms without such a pass. These students have just witnessed a new policy in place. These students have just witnessed a tardy sweep.

Like most policies which have recently been implemented, the tardy sweep is a noble effort.

Timeliness is an important and valuable skill which students will undoubtedly have to learn in order to be successful in the future. And, from a parent, superintendent and school board members' point of view, it's encouraging to see a new principal come in to a school eager to make so many improvements. But when do such policies begin to impair the school rather than improve it? There is a time for everything, and this just isn't the time for yet another rigid policy.

This year has been a rough year on students; they've returned to no senior lot, a stricter dress code and a time restriction dictating when they can and can't leave class.

Change at a steady, manageable rate can prove itself an invaluable benefit for the future. If too much change is implemented to quickly, however, it can invoke passionate feelings of anger, distress and rebellion.

While the aforementioned changes were tolerated, they pushed the student body to the edge of a certain proverbial cliff. The tardy sweeps, for lack of a better phrase, swept the entirety of the student population off the edge.

The policy, although most likely created out of the general concern of the school and its students, seems to threaten a George Orwell type of totalitarian control rather than establish an open and respectable learning environment. The administrative command instructing teachers to "lock all doors" gives off the ambiance of a federal penitentiary instead of a high achieving suburban high school.

For years, teachers have held the responsibility of marking their own students tardy. Why now, all of a sudden, can some teachers be trusted to teach college level classes, but are deemed incapable of pursuing the correct form of punishment when a student is late?

The 10:10 policy states that the first and last ten minutes of class are the most important in terms of a student's learning, yet tardy sweeps force students to miss out on those invaluable first moments of class.

CARTOON BY EMILY SPATT

The two rules contradict one another; it is imperative that students are present for the first ten minutes of class, yet it is okay to miss if it's to hand out tardy slips that could be done by teachers in class.

The negative student reaction to tardy sweep policy is a clear and worrisome foresight into the future. Despite the fact administration does have full jurisdiction over the policies, it's not a good idea to implement them all at the same time.

In order to establish a successful learning environment, students and administration must form one cohesive unit and realize mutual respect is necessary. Tardy sweeps are just yet another policy hindering that goal.

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{ THE BOTTOM LINE } *Although the recently implemented policy attracts student attention and emphasizes the importance of arriving to class on time, tardy sweeps seem to be just another to add to the list of regulations.*

SPLIT OVER SYRIA: America's direct involvement in Middle Eastern warzone

Country's interference vital to preserve security

BY COLBY SHOUP
Writer

Many Americans, both Democratic and Republican, were put in a panic when President Barack Obama announced last Thursday his plans to take unilateral military action against Syria in the upcoming weeks. Despite various protests, Obama's proposal is the only solution to effectively control Syria.

The public's concern is understandable since the United States has not technically finished fighting Iraq, the last country that it was supposedly helping through military action.

It is an undeniable fact the Iraqi war has been a disaster of epic proportions; however, the situation in Syria is completely different than the 2003 situation in Iraq.

This is because all evidence presented so far points to the fact that the Syrian government not only has weapons of mass destruction, but has used them on its own citizens. In the Iraqi war, the United States government only thought that the Iraqi government had weapons of mass destruction, and as it turned out they did not.

The Iraqi war has become one of the most embarrassing moments in American history and is thought of as a joke by the average American citizen, whereas the situation in Syria is a chance for America to do the right thing when nobody else is willing to.

The Syrian government has killed 1,400 people. This was done in a government-sanctioned gas explosion, likely with the use of sarin, which would never have occurred had it not been for the fact that the US has not yet intervened.

If the super powers of the world do not do anything about Syria's out-of-control regime, they are sending a message to other terrorists and tyrants of the world, essentially saying that they can get away with mass murder.

More importantly, the US government has the power to do something about one of the most horrid injustices of the past decade. Because of this, we have the responsibility to act upon this power in order to bring about world peace.

Historically, the cowards who idly stand by in the face of evil are not remembered with fondness; however, the proud few who do something to stop the evil they see around them are remembered as some of the greatest heroes the world has ever seen.

America was founded by heroes that stood up for injustice when the cowardly majority would not, heroes like Samuel Adams and George Washington. Our country has continued to thrive because of similar heroes that advocate justice for those who cannot demand it themselves.

It does not matter that the UN did not approve the US's proposal for an attack on Syria. America is supposed to be a nation that does what it believes is right for the people, and by taking action against the Syrian government, it is finally starting to act like one.

Invasion would intensify international conflicts

BY ETHAN YDE
Writer

The recent controversies in Syria dealing with the use of chemical weapons in a civil war pose a severe threat of possible world warfare. If the United States decides to take action in response to these issues, the safety and welfare of our country will be compromised.

Neither the high power of each country's, nor the impacted citizens, are ready to begin a large-scale war while in the midst of the war in Afghanistan. Although President Obama stated that for now there will not be soldiers in Syria, there will be possible attacks on our nation in the future which call for war. Many soldiers will just be getting home to see their families. They would be deployed after to fight in a new war in the Middle East.

What our nation needs is not another excuse to go show our dominance and power overseas, but to instead establish some time away from the constant squabble in the region, a problem which has continued far too long. The emotional tolls on soldiers and their loved ones, as well as the economic tolls on the government should be considered. To put two and two together, the possibility of losing more American soldiers is too great for the U.S. to even consider any amount of involvement.

Many may argue it is the United Nations' responsibility to take action against the use of chemical weapons, and as a part of the Head Council, it is the United States' duty to intervene. However, there is one country on the U.N.'s permanent council, which also happens to have great relations with Syria--Russia. Through the nation's strong alliance with the Syrian government, Russian president, Vladimir Putin, has already promised to restrict Syria's use of chemical weapons if additional strikes take place. With Russia's promise, technically members of the U.N. are already taking action against Syria.

Do we even know who we are fighting? The unitary republican government in Syria is led by corrupted officials. The rebels that are being targeted by the government's chemical weapons are supported by Al Qaeda. This is not a nation to mess with at the current time. Getting involved could not possibly solve anything.

The issue of interference in the Syrian civil war should not be a matter of conservatism or liberalism, or even fight or flight. It is simply a matter of common sense. We do not have the resources to go to war, we do not have the support from our country to go and along with that, we do not even have a purpose to go to Syria.

All of this leads to an important question: how could there be a reason to risk money, soldiers and international relations of a country that is already in mass amounts of debt from centuries of overspending, emotional conflicts from the tolls of the War on Terror and poor international relations? It is not our nation's business to get involved in yet another dreaded war.

STRUGGLING TO SURVIVE

In the two-year period of fighting, **.311** percent of the nation's people have died.

Syria's population of **22,530,746** in July of 2012 has steadily decreased by the thousands.

Each month, fighting kills an average of **3043** citizens, innocent and involved.

By February, **70,000** people had perished due to the nationwide violence.

SOURCE: CNN.COM

twitter take

The Spartana will attempt to capture the most impulsive responses on Twitter.

with @theSpartana

Question: "What would your ideal student section theme be?"

@ABSamatteroffact - Abbey Kittaka (12) ▶ "Cats."

@j_suth_ - Jordan Sutherland (12) ▶ "Opposite of senior citizens. Lets break out the diapers."

@cupofrESHCOFFee - Tim Eshcoff (12) ▶ "Sensible dressing night. We'll wear comfortable shoes and dress for the weather and stuff."

@JaybirdGreenlee - Jay Greenlee (11) ▶ "Comic book theme? Like super heroes and villains and such. (I just wanna be Harvey two face)"

@HeavensTo_Betsy - Betsy Badders (12) ▶ "90's boy bands/singers."

'Blurred Lines' song sparks controversy

Leading pop single promotes female inferiority while aggravating listeners

BY KYLIE POLING
Opinion Editor

If you're looking for something to listen to that's both degrading to women and promotes male dominance, then Robin Thicke's "Blurred Lines" is for you. The song featuring T.I. and Pharrell is sure to motivate listeners to get up and moving–to a women's rights protest.

"Blurred Lines" is a paragon representing the blatant promotion of male chauvinism that is, unfortunately, all too common in today's popular culture; because of this, it should be taken off of radio waves and tossed onto the road of good intentions (because we all know where that leads).

Not only is the song degrading, but it is also a euphemism of male assumption in relation to consent and is incredibly unseemly.

"The way you grab me," Thicke said, "Must wanna get nasty."

No, actions do not denote consent. Using words is the only way to give permission that is without-a-doubt unmistakable and lucid.

"I know you want it," Thicke said.

He repeats this line in several instances. Again, he's assuming:12 times.

Thicke should really not assume that the girl is into him. You know what they say about assumption. It makes an–ah, nevermind.

Sure, it is a catchy song; however, there is a line between audibly pleasing and lyrically shameful. "Blurred Lines" has, contrary to its name, made this line very clear.

"I'm a nice guy," T.I. says in a verse. He seems totally innocent. I mean, he says he's a good guy! If he says so then it must be true.

Wrong.

"But don't get confused, this pimpin,'" Thicke said.

So no, not a good guy. T.I. flat-out says that he is not pursuing the girl for honorable reasons. No respectable man would ever seriously proclaim that he was "pimpin." Have standards, ladies, please.

In addition to these lyrics, the song as a whole objectifies women. Despite being morally debilitating and just plain wrong, it is not an uncommon theme for today's pop culture. Songs like this one have desensitized people to substantial issues occurring in the world today.

India, for example, is currently struggling with an intense rape problem. That's right, rape: an act that even seasoned criminals look down upon. John Geoghan, a Roman Catholic priest who was a convicted sex offender, was murdered whilst in prison by Joseph Druce, a man who openly mocked those that disregarded consent, according to ABC News.

If convicted felons look down upon sexual offense, then why does popular culture openly support and objectify the behavior discussed in these radio-dominating songs?

▶5 weeks "Blurred Lines" remained in the number one spot in the Billboard music charts

Music like "Blurred Lines" is mass-produced for two reasons.

One being that it sells. It sells because most listeners are naïve to the more subtle nuances of the lyrics, which have varying degrees of moral inhibition.

The second reason would be in the interest of expediency, meaning that record labels and producers will produce and distribute any song that even has the smallest possibility of making a quick buck. These are usually mutually exclusive and Thicke's song is no exception.

"Blurred Lines" will soon outlive its inevitably ephemeral existence and join its fellow one-hit-wonders and misogynistic anthems in eternal desuetude--sooner rather than later, if I have anything to say about it.

PHOTO BY ALLIE NELSON

Robotics club introduced to student body

New group offers students opportunity to experiment with creativity, prepare for future careers

By Hamna Quereshi
Writer

The school welcomes a new club this year, the F.I.R.S.T. Robotics Team. This club is an internationally recognized institution that has finally made its way to Fort Wayne, where both students and the adviser are optimistic about the club.

The F.I.R.S.T. in F.I.R.S.T. Robotics Team stands for "For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology." This team incorporates science, technology and other 21st Century Skills.

Students in this club must build a robot that they will take to competitions, where they will be competing with teams from all over the country. The robot must perform a certain task, which the team does not know until January.

After the first Saturday in January when the team finds out about its task, it has six weeks to build and program a robot that meets the requirements set by the F.I.R.S.T. Robotics Competition.

"F.I.R.S.T. Robotics Team is about real-world application," Mr. Steverson, the new chemistry and physics teacher, and also the teacher representative for the club, said. "There is a strict time frame and lack of money and resources."

The strict guidelines are a motivating, rather than deterring, factor for students looking for a challenge.

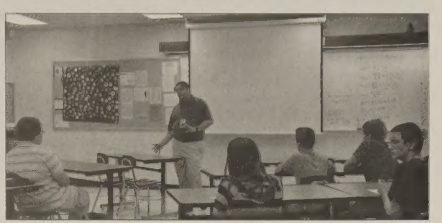
"I am definitely looking forward to the intense six-week build season in which we have to build the robot," Puneeth Meruva (11) said. "(The club) allows members to experience high-intensity situations and time constraints that are often present in the work field."

F.I.R.S.T. Robotics Team is open to any and all students at Homestead. The team will incorporate many different aspects including budgeting, research and the actual building of the robot.

"I think that the multidisciplinary nature of robotics is what makes it so intriguing for me," Meruva said. "The field of robotics really involves mathematics, science and many fields of engineering such as mechanical, electrical and computer engineering."

Steverson specifies that all students are welcome to the club and that there are many different aspects of the team that could appeal to different types of students.

"(F.I.R.S.T.) is student built and run," Steverson said. "The team includes aspects of budgeting, marketing, arts and writing."



Club adviser and science teacher, Robert Steverson, presents to interested members his ideas regarding the club and his plans for the students in the organization to grow this upcoming school year.

PHOTO BY LEAH VALENTINE

This club is also an impressive addition to a college application. Many organizations, such as NASA, sometimes provide funding for this team and hold it in high esteem.

"Schools like Purdue know what F.I.R.S.T. is without you even having to say anything about it," Steverson said. "(Organizations) see this program as training for future employees."

Meruva is also eager to take hold of the various opportunities that F.I.R.S.T. presents.

"(Robotics team) will help present many opportunities to me in terms of college and job choice that I hope to take advantage of," Meruva said. "I believe that I can improve my leadership skills, my time-management skills and my proficiency in technology."

Steverson hopes to attract a variety of students by the time the competition begins in January. Interested students are encouraged to attend the weekly Wednesday meetings in Steverson's room 203. Students do not have to commit full-time until January, so there is still time to join the team.

"Sports are great, but not everyone can be in the NFL," Steverson said. "All students in this club can get a job relating to it."

PHOTOS BY REAGAN MIKESELL

Hangout locations important to morning routine, associated with social groups

By Awbrei Vachon
Writer

Going to school is not the highlight of anybody's day. The student body is required to get up early, put on decent attire and pretend like they care about misplaced modifiers, imaginary numbers and ancient Chinese civilizations. Being able to hang out and socialize with friends before the bell, however, makes the morning slightly more tolerable.

The options of where one might decide to hang out are endless. Firstly, there is the swimmers' area, which is located by the main doors.

Next there is the library, and then the commons, which also includes the ramp, and lastly, the freshman academy.

"In high school there's (sic) so many different types of people with so many different interests," Rachel Farmer (12), swimmer, said. "I think groups of friends kind of designate an area as theirs (and) you just fall into that comfortable routine."

For the swimmers, meeting in the front of the school has been a tradition for a while now, and the girls tend to relax between practice and school, sharing breakfast and stories alike.

Not too far from the main doors is the library, where things get a little bit quieter, but not the least bit less enjoyable.

"It's nice that we get hundreds of kids in here in the morning just hanging out and chatting," Nicole Detter, librarian, said. "I'd probably meet here (too), just because I've always liked libraries and reading."

Detter also made a point to mention how the comfortable chairs in the library contribute to its overall likability.

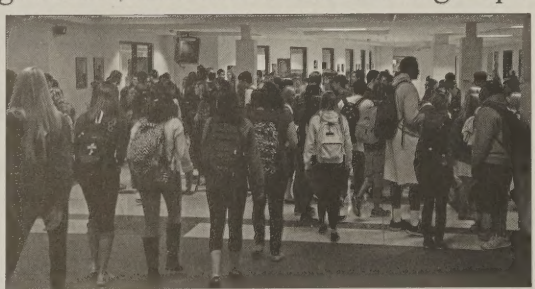
In the commons, despite its lack of seating, students find other reasons to carry out their mingling there instead of any other place.

"It's closer to where our classes are," Morgan Graham (10), said, expressing the location's convenience.

Although the nearness of one's first period class does play a major role in the meeting place, Ethan Snead (11), who can be found in the performance hall every morning, claimed there are deeper motives than just hanging out somewhere because of its logicality.

"Most of my friends that are in my first period class are in there, too and I'm actually really close with them," Snead said. "We're basically a family."

Last but not least, the freshman academy is always hopping with bright-eyed and bushy-tailed students, and according to Cameron Livensparger (9), there are plenty of busy-bodies to talk to, usually found in the same general vicinities.



Top: The front commons offers a meeting place for students every morning. Above: Students begin to desert the clusters of the morning spots and slowly journey to their first period class.

"People tend to gather in the same area," Livensparger said. "If someone's sitting at a bench, they'll usually be there the next day."

This seems to be a recurring theme in the rest of the school as well.

"If I see a (certain) person passing, I'll know it's time to go to class," Shealee Zielinski (11) said. "hey're leaving so I have to leave. It's just a chain reaction kind of thing."

Although the atmosphere in the morning is considerably lethargic with all the sleep-deprived individuals walking around, it is not always entirely boring.

"One morning I was standing on the ramp by the cafeteria and somebody dropped a huge container of pop," Emma Baker (10), morning hangout participant said. "Then this guy walked by and picked it up, but instead of throwing it away, he took a drink of it, set it back down, and kept walking."

Senior entrepreneur certified in home automation

Senior installs home system interfaces for profit, extends repertoire beyond career in managing event music

Running a professional business while in high school requires coordination and efficiency; Emmet Elizondo's (12) home automation service specializes in just that. Well known DJ of school dances, Elizondo's next entrepreneurial endeavor has just opened up shop. E2 Home Automation specializes in interfaces which allow total home control from afar. Yet with only a month under the company's belt, Elizondo has drawn from his already established customer base to propel his interest in technology from a casual hobby to a business opportunity.

Spartana: How did you decide to pursue a business in this niche?

EE: It's kind of an extension (of my DJ business). I've messed around a lot with home automation, just at my house, and a couple people asked (if I would do) automation for (their) house. I'm certified for Leviton security and automation now, and I have about 9 houses lined up. I did one last week, and I have one going this weekend, so it's keeping me busy.

Spartana: What was the process like to set up your business?

EE: My mom actually came up to me and asked, 'Hey, do you want to start a business with this?' (after I had worked in my own house). I looked into it and figured out what you actually needed to do, went and got certified (in New Orleans) and did a couple installations to learn the system. I was the youngest person at the training course, but I understand this stuff and I enjoy it. Then I took care of business and legal aspects, and that's where I am now. I basically started this only a month ago.

Spartana: What specific kind of installation do you do?

EE: The house I'm going to do this weekend has a full security system, lighting control for each room and thermostat. Once I integrate it, you can control your whole house from your phone, anywhere in the world. So you can turn your alarm on, turn your lights on and off, set your thermostat, get notifications and everything all on your cell phone or on a touch screen in the house. It is security, lighting, garage door control, thermostat and whole house audio. All your little systems that you could have in a house (with this technology) you can control via an iPhone or any mobile device anywhere in the world.

Spartana: Where do you see this business going from here?

EE: I plan on continuing this for a while, at least. I'm still deciding on colleges and where I want to live, because that would change (how I run the business) also. I have a base here, but I don't really want to live in Fort Wayne where I grew up. It might be an option after I figure out where I want to go to college for me to move sooner to get my base concrete in a location. I plan on continuing this career for a while, or at least something that involves this technology. I just like that people are interested in what I'm doing and want to get involved in having me install systems in their house.

PHOTO BY LEAH VALENTINE

Spartana: How can people get in contact with you?

EE: You can either go on my website at e2homeautomation.com or you can give me a call at (260)-226-3235.

--Sarah Camino

Expectation to drive creates too much stress for average teens

Car key lanyards hanging limp out of the pockets of proud student drivers are only the aftermath of hours of cautious driving and tears.

The drivers emit an aura of accomplishment; they finally completed their training and passed their tests. But the problem with driving is that I'm seventeen and my mom still drives me to school.

Of course, if you're a freshman or a sophomore, you can relate to me. As of now, you're still reliant on someone else to drive you places. You have to schedule your plans around theirs.

You constantly have to pick up rides from friends. You're probably counting down the days until you can get your license. Just imagine that feeling and drag it out about six more months. That's how I'm feeling.

Having gotten my learner's permit nearly a year-and-a-half ago, I can relate to students who are two years younger than me.

JESS SAYIN'

BY JESSICA TEBBEN
Life Editor

Feeling like I'm missing out on some big inside joke, I am finally beginning to anticipate receiving the prestigious card, often referred to as a driver's license, but known to me as freedom.

Most teenagers plan on getting their driver's license on the first day they are eligible. That was my plan as well, until I realized I hated driving.

I've heard stories of kids driving all the way home from the BMV after being behind the wheel for the first time, but I could barely make it through my neighborhood without having a panic attack.

Thus, like any other person who is terrified of the open road, my fear stemmed from a bad experience early on.

Of course I was scared, because, really, everyone is scared when they begin to drive. To my younger classmates, I say don't take my fear of driving as inspiration.

It's normal to be scared, but you need to get over it quicker than I did. You will regret it if you don't. Take it from me; my mom still drives me everywhere. I know what I'm talking about.

I watched as my driver's training partner made perfect turns and stopped at just the right time, and I thought about how my stops were short and fast and how my turns could give whiplash.

I had to remind myself that I was just a beginner, having a mere 15 hours compared to her full 50.

Soon, I felt I could match her expertise, but that was only after more practice with my dad. I still hated to drive, and when I told my friends, they told me I was insane. Who wouldn't want complete freedom?

As I had my learner's permit for longer and longer, I watched in jealousy as my friends and peers alike began driving to school.

I was still taking my time, however, and I was still content with my mom driving me to school and picking me up again.

Friends told me how great driving was for them. Family continued to ask me if I had my license yet.

Replying with a lackluster "not yet" or a not-so-confident "I'm getting there," I began to finally see what I had been missing without a license. But mostly, I realized how annoying everyone was about driving.

Since school started, I have been reintroduced to the keys and the lanyards bursting out of my peer's pockets, shinier than ever and boasting my inferiority.

I always wanted to carry a lanyard. But my mom was still waiting outside in the same place she usually was, and I was going to sit in the passenger seat and regret putting off getting my license for so long.

Is it possible to miss something you've never had? Because I've sure been missing my driver's license a lot lately.

Being more socially adept this year, which still isn't very social, I feel a little over-reliant on my mom and a lot lacking in a driver's license.

"Most teenagers plan on getting their driver's license on the first day they are eligable. That was my plan as well, until I realized I hated driving."

JESSICA TEBBEN

Thus, I have recently begun to make more of an effort to drive my parents anywhere that we go. My mom still gets nervous, but I think she has more faith in me. My dad doesn't pay attention at all while I drive, which I take as total confidence in me.

Now, I have to journey back to the BMV. I'm going to go early so that I don't run into the sketchy men and the business women you can find there during the day. I am going to take my test, and I am going to pass it with flying colors.

My mom is probably going to forget some important paperwork, so we're going to have to go home and then come back.

After maybe two grueling hours (I may or may not be exaggerating), I'll have it. I'll hold freedom in my own two hands. I've been waiting for the moment my entire life.

And the first thing I'll probably do with it is go to McDonald's. God bless America.

PHOTO BY WILLIAM NGO

Social network turns complaint outlet as school year unfolds

BY WILLIAM NGO
Executive Editor

Within mere days, a Twitter hate-page gained enough followers to surpass the official Spartans, football and lacrosse accounts.

In fewer than 100 updates, the internet persona criticized the school's regulations, policies and faculty – and the administration has not acted against it.

The technological age, originally meant to connect and inform, demonstrated the downside of electronic advancement with the creation of an anonymous Twitter feed comprised of hostile comments.

By the afternoon of August 9, word of the newest webpage flooded classrooms, generating mixed responses ranging from admiration to disgust. The most popular kid walking the halls, in fact, proved to be not a 6'5" jock but rather a digital conception.

A belief, which states any administrator may remove a social network page, remains prevalent between students, generally speaking. Contrary to rumor, because the Twitter page practices its freedom of speech and right to express opinion, those supervisors have no need to intervene with this online disruption.

The administration, however, may take action whenever any unlawful or threatening updates are detected. These circumstances include threats to students, school officials and the building foundation. All rules and consequences are finalized directly by the SACS school board.

"Whoever is behind (the account) has just as much of a right to free speech as anybody, but the vulgar things they've posted reflect poorly on himself as an individual and on (the school)."

LAURA LAUDEMAN (12)
Twitter User

In this case, if danger were to be sensed, the school may begin further investigation using any given information. In terms of shutting down a page, police involvement may occur if necessary, and criminal charges may be charged for intimidation and harassment as well.

"Unless there's something threatening or meeting the standards for true bullying, it's free speech," Ingrid Harriott, resource officer, said. "(Administration is) not here to squash everybody's opinions. People can certainly have their opinions."

Jeff Kintz, assistant principal, believes the majority of the page presents itself inappropriately but not to the point where it crosses a line of felony. He feels expressing one's opinions denotes the primary purpose of Twitter anyhow.

In the past year alone, a couple nameless personalities insulted the student body through other networks like Instagram. One account labeled itself a derogatory name, targeting especially the school's female population. A few short weeks later, a similar page pursued and directed its cruelty at male students.

As online venting noticeably became easier and more common throughout the years, the ability to profess personal feelings digitally as opposed to personal confrontation was coined keyboard courage.

"If you want to see real change happen, come to (administration)," Harriott said. "I would invite the person who created this account to bring some of his or her concerns and actually address it in a manner where you're going to get a result. (Online venting) isn't doing anything."

Laura Laudeman (12) made her thoughts clear during a defensive online conversation with the account.

She and a few courageous others publicly reminded their peers of the obligation to stand up against the hate-page and encouraged them to report the account to Twitter officials.

"Whoever is behind (the account) has just as much of a right to free speech as anybody, but the vulgar things they've posted reflect poorly on himself as an individual and on (the school)," Laudeman said.

Guidance counselor LaShanda Gates believes every person is entitled to his freedom of speech whether it be hurtful or not. As a counselor, she can only try to educate and prevent online hate.

"Be mindful and think through things before you take action," Gates said.

WHAT'S GOING ON?

554,750,000
Total number of active registered Twitter users

58 million
Average number of tweets per day

9,100
Average number of tweets per day

$399,500,000
2013 Twitter Advertising Revenue

SOURCE: HTTP://WWW.STATISTICBRAIN.COM

Club focuses on positivity within school

Extracurricular draws support from students and faculty

BY JESSICA TEBBEN
Life Editor

As John F. Kennedy once said, "One person can make a difference, and everyone should try." Student and staff members of The Network have taken that quote and made it a reality within the school.

Although not the first year The Network has been circulating, hype about the club has grown tremendously since last February, when the initial idea for the club was coined by a group of students.

"It was really students that decided to form the club," Sarah Jones, teacher representative, said. "It's very much student (driven)."

So far, the group has subdivided itself into six different categories, including, but not limited to, Random Acts of Kindness, Brainstorming and Ideas Generators and Art and Writing Connoisseurs.

The subcategories serve as a means of organization and aid in specialization according to student passion.

Last Friday, the group came out with a notecard video similar to the one they released last year.

Matching its name, one purpose of The Network is, in fact, networking. Jones created a My Big Campus group for interested students to join, and students have worked to make a Twitter feed and a Facebook page in order to reach out past the school and into the community.

"I know some members of The Network are thinking big," Jones said. "They're very much visionaries in this and thinking how can we team up with community organizations with this message as well, and creating community awareness of the same issues."

Aside from community collaboration, the group is thinking on a more school-based level, including networking with Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) to raise attendance for their annual event, Bowling Over Bullies.

"We're thinking on collaborating with different groups and clubs within the school and sponsoring different events," Gabby Hollman (11), club member, said.

So far, promotion of the club has been a success, leading to positive reactions from the student body.

"I have had students personally come and thank me. Somehow they knew that I was a part of it," Jones said. "That's really the thing that I've noticed that most so far is just other students talking about it. It's just generating a lot of interesting dialogue."

The students seem to be enticed by the overall purpose of the club: to make the school's environment a more welcoming one that students and staff can be proud of.

"(The Network's is all about) just creating a culture of kindness and compassion at Homestead," Dashaen Jordan(12), student representative said.

However, the students are not the only supporters of The Network. Administrators such as principal Park Ginder and Assistant Principal Jen Bay have expressed their contentment with the mission of the club and are encouraging its continuation.

Continue it shall. The endless promotion along with student desire to make the school and the community a better place are fueling the fires for the optimism of the club.

"I guess my grand vision for The Network is just sparking a chain reaction of kindness and compassion and courtesy. Those are three things I think are very lacking in people's interactions with one another and just focusing on the joy," Jones said. "We're all bombarded, we're all overwhelmed, we all have difficult things that we're trying to overcome and so often we think negatively about those things before we think about the good that could come from them."

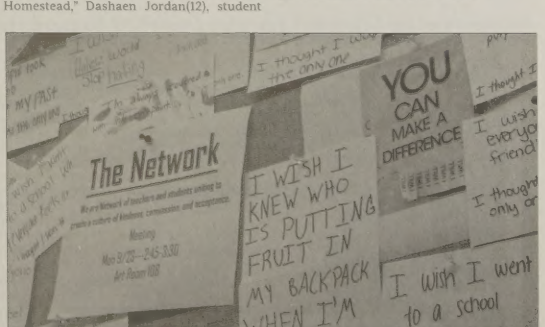


PHOTO BY LEAH VALENTINE

Fairly new club, The Network, dominates the display case in the school's atrium. The space is filled with handwritten wishes from the student body about what it desires to see in the school.

PHOTO BY WILLIAM RICE

Athletes bond before team roster announced

Camp Crosley provides pre-season preparation, veteran swimmers take lead

BY AUSTEN CUMMINGS
Writer

In anticipation for the upcoming season, last year's swim team veterans and this year's newcomers traveled to Camp Crosley from Sept. 6-8 to North Webster, Ind.

Camp Crosley offered the opportunity for a team building experience even prior to the season. Each athlete went through a course of challenging activities in order to strengthen his perseverance, endurance and bond with one another. Some of these tasks included a giant ladder, swing and low rope challenges. For example, the members participated in a game in which they stood on a log and had to order themselves alphabetically without any verbal communication; if anyone touched the ground, he was forced to start over.

Seth Johnson (12) led the team at camp with his experience from previous years. He participated with school swim team since his years at Summit Middle School.

> "The camp is all about teamwork and coming together as a team to get the freshmen involved in the team more."
>
> **SETH JOHNSON (12)**
> *Swim team member*

"The camp is all about teamwork and coming together as a team and to get the freshmen involved in the team more," Johnson said.

Chad Englehart, head coach, chose each member for the camp by their experience and potential.

"The camp definitely gives them a positive start to the season, but it's the matter of maintaining their momentum and keeping the things they learned from camp in the forefront of their minds (in order) to continue to grow in their team leadership skills," Englehart said.

Because the teams have not been chosen yet, each swimmer at Camp Crosley worked to collaborate and bond in order to form a more successful unit. The basis of the workshop was to display affective forms of communication and perseverance, characteristics of a State Championship winning team.

"They talked a lot about us working together as a team and making sure everyone's ideas are heard," Katie Decker (10) said.

The swimmers found the camp helpful yet challenging due to the differences in personality and age.

"Some people are very driven and then there are others who have more trouble focusing," Decker said.

Despite any adversities the team may have faced, senior leaders took the time to ensure a positive result. With their experience, they hoped to positively influence underclassmen.

"I think we came together (as a team) and now the freshmen are talking. (Because of that), we are a better team now," Johnson said.

The camps were put in place to teach something to a team, whether it be leadership, certain skills or how to be a good teammate.

"It was a great learning experience, and they had a lot of team building experiences. They took advantage of (what they learned)," Englehart said.

KICKING FOR STATE

Varsity team continues undefeated

PHOTOS BY REAGAN MYKESELL

BY SYDNEY ISROFF
Business Manager

Striving in the current season, girls soccer team has set high expectations for the rest of the year.

Winning against arch rival Canterbury, the team has been running on adrenaline ever since.

As the girls with this momentum, they expect a positive outcome. Successfully mastering the skills on the field, they work well together.

"Everyone gets along and we just have a great time together but can be serious and work hard at the same time." Alexandra Natoli (12) said.

Every day the team improves as a whole as it works together to build off one another's skills. With each practice and game, the girls will continue to improve for success in future matches.

"We have expectations. Our girls are working hard every day in practice and games to get better to be ready to go once the tournament comes," Katie Metz, head coach, said.

The girls must work to stay focused and motivated to continue their undefeated season as planned.

The close relationship between the girls empowers them on the field; most girls on the team refer to it as a family.

"We have two starters with torn ACL's so we had to find a way to replace those positions" Allison Link (12) said.

As the girls work to build a strong team around the injured players, they learn to identify each other's strengths and weaknesses to fully take advantage of their skill level. Ideally, this strategy will give the team enough of an advantage and edge to dominate the season.

"We are coming together nicely and getting prepared to play Dekalb. We have some really good games coming up in this next week." Metz said.

With a record of 8-0-3, the team must continue with the momentum to carry on this winning streak.

"As the season progresses we are learning to work harder to advance through tournament," Natoli said.

The team is on the road to success, and although an undefeated season is the ideal goal, the girls have set their goals high: the State Championship.

The team predicts to advance through its tournament and eventually make it to state finals.

With the away games throughout the state, these expectations do not seem unrealistic.

The girls had conquered last year's state champions, Mishawaka Marian, over the summer during a game.

That victory gave the team a hopeful expectation for the rest of the season.

Senior players Morgan Cole (12), Natoli, Link, Hannah Miller (12) and Rose Wolfcale (12) step up to lead the team this season, fulfilling their roles as leaders.

"I definitely think there is room for improvement but I am really proud of how we have played so far," Link said.

As long as the girls stay motivated and focused once it comes down to game day, their hard work will continue to pay off.

The youth of the team has also played a crucial role, prepping for next year along with building a unique dynamic.

On Sept. 19, the team honored the upperclassmen during senior night. The event paid tribute to the seniors' hard work and dedication throughout the years.

Next Thursday's game against Carroll will be the last home game of the season but if that same power from previous games continues, it will surely not be the last in the tournament.

Above: Isabel Wells (10) plays head to head against a DeKalb member. Bottom: Morgann Williams (11) stands alert during the DeKalb match. The team walked away victorious with a score of 2-0.

Determination leads runners to practice and improve

Success at Terre Haute Invitational provides high hopes for upcoming season

BY ADAM SWIATKOWSKI
Writer

This fall, students may be tucking away their tennis shoes, but the boys cross country team is just beginning to work hard and strenuously train once again for the impending season.

After participating in an invitational on Saturday, Sept. 7 in Terre Haute, the team captains, Mitch Meyer (12), Tyler Koteskey (12) and Patrick Rittenhouse (12) were satisfied with the team's early season performance.

"(The meet result) was promising and we still feel that we have a good chance to do well," Koteskey said. "(The team) is just going to improve from here and we can still make a long run in the postseason and make our way into the state finals."

The varsity team placed well in Terre Haute, achieving a high place of seventh out of 23 teams, and the junior varsity ran its way into third place. The athletes beat out other well performing schools in the final standings and were competing closely with the likes of Carmel.

The runners began to seriously prepare for the meet the week of the invitational, changing their diets and training schedules to prepare themselves for the exertion of a 5,000 meter run. On the day of the meet, team customs took over as all runners got ready to put their preparation into practice.

"The week before the meet we run extra mileage and train harder while focusing on our run for the weekend," Meyer said. "The day of the meet we do (plyometric exercises) and a team prayer before the race and on our final warm up runs we do a chant to pump us up."

During the Terre Haute Invitational, teammates lined the course to offer encouragement to their fellow runners and the school's runners stayed together to increase their in-race motivation.

"We give (each other) small bits of information and try to tell each other how well we are doing when racing together," Kolin Behrens (10) said. "We try to pull each other along and attempt to use our pack of teammates to mentally defeat other competitors through intimidation and determination."

The results of the invitational will serve as a practice meet leading up to other larger competitions. Terre Haute is a learning meet and can help the team assess which aspects of its runs should be worked on. The athletes will utilize the event to pinpoint focus areas for the future.

"Invitationals are fun but (give us) tough competition, yet they allow us to see (where we need) improvement and show us that we have a chance to (reach our goal) of winning Semi-State," Koteskey said.

More meets are set to follow, and the team is ready to improve results and gain confidence for the upcoming conference. As this will be one of the last years of the school's participation the Northern Hoosier Conference (NHC) championship for cross country, the team has also set its eyes on this worthy checkpoint.

"(This meet) will be a big focus, so we (can say) that our team is one of the final winners of the NHC championship," Behrens said. "Semi-State is also really competitive, we focus on that meet to qualify into state."

PHOTO BY MEGAN BUTLER

Kyle Leland (11) sprints towards the finish line during a race, as another competitor tries to pass him.

Female athletes suffer double standard unlike male counters

Staring at my stoic-faced peers, I danced around in a frilly, rhinestoned dress - not exactly liberating. Fine Arts Day is supposed to be about appreciation and pride in our fellow peers' talent.

This, however, is not the case when you're a dancer. The demanding hours, exhausting conditioning and total commitment boiled down to our last performance of the season.

Every national and state award, every turn, every leap, every eight-count would play out one last time. Sadly enough, most students could not have cared less.

What I observed in my years as a female athlete was the devotion and effort I put into my sport, which was awfully similar to that of any other football or baseball player.

My freshman and sophomore years consisted of school and dance with very few activities in between.

When I was not at a team practice, I was at conditioning or the studio. When I was not there, I was resting to prepare for another day of demanding practice.

As if five school days were not enough, on Saturday mornings I would wake up at four and sit on a bus for three hours. My days did not end until midnight, and somehow I had the drive to do this all season long. Reminiscing on that now, I have not a clue how I persevered.

HAIDEN'S HIGHLIGHTS

But those recollections often spark no interest in others.

If the differences are little between the life of a dancer and the life of another athlete, why is it so hard for people to view it as a sport?

BY HAIDEN STEINGASS
Sports Editor

I would like to think dancing is not overshadowed by more dominate sports such as basketball; unfortunately, the callused feet, aching backs and sore abs of a dancer do not faze most athletes as sports related.

As a high school student, I witnessed the fame and attention which our athletes gain during their season.

More often than not, the boys' sports teams are recognized in an exciting and supportive manner, whereas the majority of the time girls' sports are noted but not proclaimed.

With little acknowledgment, the dance team participates in countless school sponsored events throughout one year but is often overlooked.

For the sake of arguing, there is a myriad of similarities between dance and football or any other sport for that matter.

Hours of practice are attended every single day. Summer conditioning is crucial to the school year performance.

Gaining core strength can enhance the athlete's overall ability to perform. Stamina is built in order to withstand an entire play or routine.

Hundreds of dollars are spent on uniforms and equipment. Injuries are bound to happen based on the physical distress the muscles and bones endure. The list goes on and on.

Personally, when I watch a football game, I see a team of dedicated, passionate people who want to display their hard work and abilities. I would be lying if I said I did not see the exact same qualities in a group of dancers.

A column less than 700 words surely will not pursuade every person to walk away with a new mindset and the desire to appreciate dancers as athletes, but I hope some take a step back and respect the drive of dancers at least.

It takes years of ballet, jazz or another form to realize the fact dance is both an art and a sport. It would be ideal for them to be appreciated the same, but that is an ongoing variation which may never have a desired result.

> "What I observed in my years as a female athlete is the devotion and effort I put into my sport (or fine art) was awfully similar to that of any sports player."
>
> **HAIDEN STEINGASS**

I walked off the gym floor leaving behind a trail of bobby pins and beloved memories.

Two years ago, Fine Arts Day was my last dance performance ever before I decided to pursue other activities.

Most of the time, I am content with my decision to end my dance career. Other days, I look at where I could have been and the improvements which I spent years dreaming to achieve.

Now, when someone asks what sport I participate in, I have a bittersweet response and a lot of unanswered questions.

It is difficult to explain why exactly I quit dance, but it was an exhuastive decision which seems a life time away.

When something you loved does not fit in your life anymore, it becomes more apparent than desired. I will still call myself a dancer and appreciate all I learned from the years of training.

I would have loved to have left that floor knowing students and teachers were as impacted by those two minutes and fifty seconds as I was.

Behind the dress curtains do not only stand glamorized faces and sparkly costumes; but it stands athletes who have devoted their lives to something bigger.

ATHLETE SPOTLIGHT: BRAYDEN LAW (10)

Brayden Law (10) has a successful running career, to say the least. He was the first ranked varsity runner on the boys' cross country team for two straight years, and this season he dashes with an outstanding 18 rank in the state for his 5k time.

PHOTO BY ALLIE NELSON

Some of his greatest accomplishments include a silver medal in the 1500 meter run and a gold medal in the 3000 meter run in the Junior Olympics this summer. Although only a sophomore, this athlete's future is already bright. The Spartana sat down with Law to reflect on his victorious past and future in track and cross country.

Spartana: How long have you been running, and what was your main inspiration to start?

Brayden Law: I started in 3rd grade as a sprinter, and I was pretty good. When cross country came around in middle school I tried it out. I figured out that I was a lot better at long distance than sprinting, so I decided to stick with it. It's become a big success in my life.

Spartana: What is a typical training session like for you?

BL: I train with the team everyday. Sometimes we go out and do our easy days, which are more for the mileage and not as much for the toughness; sometimes we do intervals on hard days which is mostly where I pick up most of the speed for my 5k.

Spartana: What are your all-time greatest accomplishments in cross country and track?

BL: One of my greatest accomplishments was definitely finally winning and getting that gold medal in the Junior Olympics. Winning the Junior Olympics was one of my biggest goals ever since I began running in 3rd grade.

Spartana: What are your most memorable moments this season?

BL: So far this season, (it was) probably the 1,000 interval workout we did a few weeks ago. I feel like the team and I really crushed that workout. Another memorable moment was the trip down to Terre Haute for the state preview. That was pretty fun, and there are still some great moments to come.

Spartana: What is your favorite part about being a member of the cross country team?

BL: Well, I love competing and being with the team, and running is always different. You can go out and be having the worst day of your life, and have a great race. It can totally change your mood about something. It's a great way to get away from everything in life.

Spartana: What have you been working on improving lately?

BL: I have been working very hard at practice to hopefully get down to a 15:30 in the 5k. Right now my personal record is a 15:35, so I will work hard in practice to get to that time.

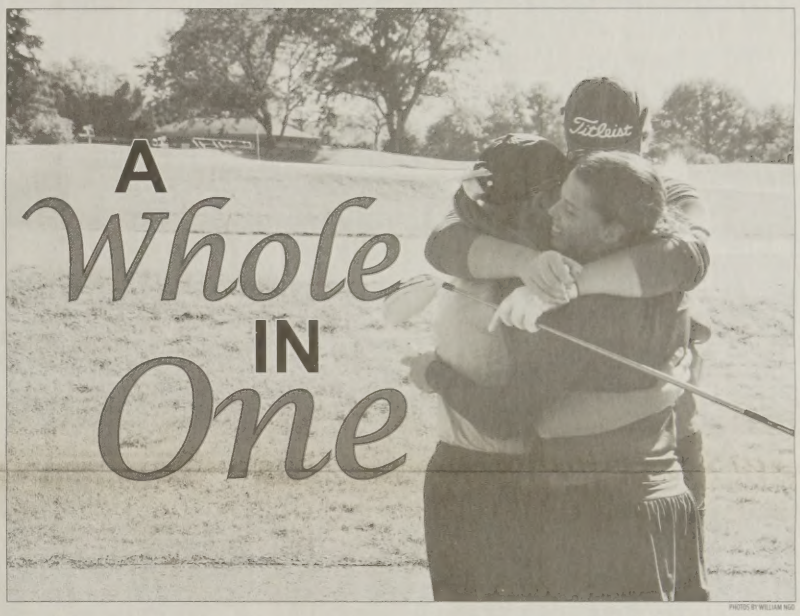
Spartana: Do you have any specific goals for this year in cross country?

BL: My number one goal is to get top 15 at state and maybe even top 10. With the state ranking me lower than that, I will have to try hard and see what happens.

Spartana: What are your goals for the future of your running career?

BL: I would like to win State junior year or at least get top 5, and then for my senior year I definitely want to win state.

--Ethan Yde



PHOTOS BY WILLIAM NGO

A Whole IN One

Golfers drive their way through season with high scores

BY KATIE MAHER
Writer

Typically underrated to other fall sports like football, golf is a sport which requires great skill and dedication, and these qualities have been evident in this season's team. So far, the girls have managed to dominate the competition with the assistance of a new coach

Thus far, the athletes had a phenomenal season and have plans to dominate sectionals, regionals and beyond.

Significantly, they have already tied the school score record. With such a high success rate, the team is leaning toward bigger goals.

"Our main team goal is to make it to state," Annie Butchko (12) said. "If we work really hard, I think we can make it through sectionals and regionals and make it to state. My personal goal is to do my best and finish out my senior year the best I can."

One modified aspect of the team was the new head coach, Jeffery Jehl. Previously, Jehl worked with the Leo High School golf team.

"It was hard to adjust because we miss and love our old coach so much," Alyssa Hoffman (12) said. "(Jehl is) really great and really strives to help us individually and as a team, and he has given us the motivation and discipline to get us on the level we've achieved as a team."

Jehl also developed a general idea regarding where he wants his team to be by the end of this season. He believes hard work and team spirit will push the team to reach its goals.

"I expect each of my players to get better every day they touch a club," Jehl said. "I also expect them to have the mental toughness to compete as a Spartan every time they wear blue and yellow. If we do these two things, the results will speak for themselves."

> "I expect each of my players to get better every day they touch a club. I also expect them to have a mental toughness to compete as a Spartan every time they wear blue and yellow. If we do these two things, the results will speak for themselves."
>
> **JEFFERY JEHL**
> *Head Coach*

With hard work and team enthusiasm , the team pulled itself through in triumph. It tied the nine hole school match record of 160.

The team saw an impressive amount of all-time low scores. This season, Butchko scored a 41 and Hoffman scored a 43, which were their own personal records.

"We're just getting started," Jehl said. "From day one, we've had our sights set on being our best in the postseason, and I am confident we will do just that."

Even with an enduring emphasis on practice, the team remembers why it enjoy the game for what it is.

"Golf makes me feel either on top of the world or really bad, not much in between," Hoffman said. "It's a tough sport mentally and has taught me patience, honesty, teamwork and discipline, while allowing me to have a great time with my girls and make some great strides together. I love it."

Although the girls' passion to go hit on the course every day is often overlooked by others, their combination of hard work, determination and spirit makes the girls an unstoppable force.

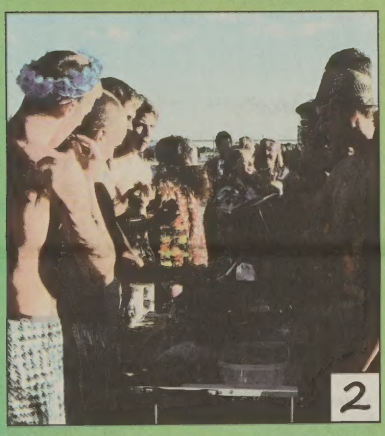
Above: Team members emotionally embrace each other before the first round of the Conference on Sept. 14 at Orchid Ridge Country Club. Middle: Madison Yenser (12) prepares to putt the ball. She crouches down to better predict the ball's line of flight. Yenser has been a member of the golf team for four years. Bottom: Alyssa Hoffman (12) watches her ball immediately after impact. She has played with the school's golf team since her freshman year.

You're Gonna Hear Us ROAR

By Allie Nelson
Executive Editor

Sporting monochromatic color, age-specific attire and face paint, the student section gives spectators something to shout about while initiating an encouraging environment for athletes. The group experienced a surge in popularity last year when the section gathered community-wide recognition. This year, senior leaders aspire to achieve what their predecessors have done and more.

1



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"The student section is like the extra man on the field," Alex Weaver (12), student section leader, said. "We encourage the players to do their best and we get them excited to do what they can."

Although last year's student section made significant leaps in size and unity, leaders want more. Because of the originality of the themes, all students are encouraged to go out and support the team.

"(We hope for) more. More bodies. I would love to see the freshmen and sophomores get as excited as the juniors and seniors," Joe Updegrove, athletic director, said. "There were some seniors that went around to each of the freshman advisories and said (to) get involved. Buy the shirt, buy the black shirt, buy the gold shirt and get involved and join us."

Beginning this year, student government is hosting a pregame tailgate prior to the homecoming game. Because the dance attendance steadily dropped in recent years, members came to the realization a change was necessary and students looked forward to the spirit of the game over anything else.

"(The tailgate) will draw more people into the game to do something fun before helping support the team," Maggie Reecer (12), student government representative, said.

Although the changes the leaders plan to make will dramatically emphasize the effects of the support group, the student section must be seen as one entity. The participation of younger members forces awareness of the spirit no longer coming only from the senior painters but from freshmen, sophomores and juniors as well. Leaders are trying to find a name to connect the whole group and are open to suggestions.

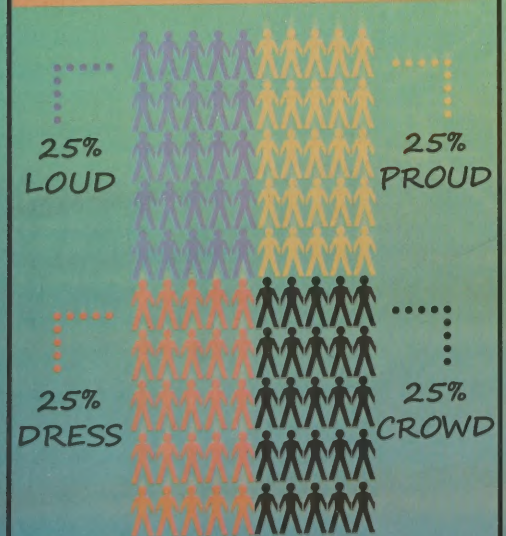
Not only is the demonstration of school spirit enjoyable for those who embrace the common theme but the excitement influences the athletes on the field as well.

"I think it's really important to go out there and support so (the team) has the fire and drive to do well in front of their friends," Sam DeCaro (11), student section member, said. "It's an intimidation factor for the other teams and it makes a name for (the school)."

This year, a primary goal of the student is to remain positive and respectful of both the home players and the players of the other team. New methods of gathering a larger crowd have been recently discussed to promote an enthusiastic, positive environment.

"The majority of the student body (is) out there cheering on their team," Updegrove said. "In a crowd of 500, you will always have two or three that want it to be about (them). Not about the team, not about the excitement, but about (them). There seems to always be somebody trying to ruin it for everybody else. Whether it's through their language or the way they dress or when they stand up and yell something that's really not called for. I want the student body (to) have fun and support our teams."

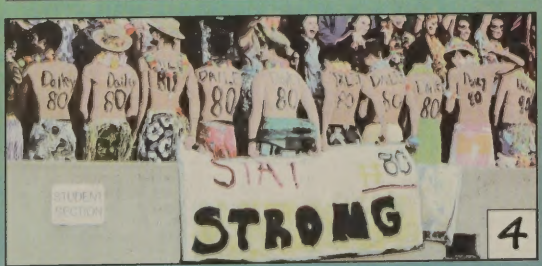
How to be a student section



This season, leaders intend to recreate a situation from last basketball season. An away game at Carroll created great anticipation and provided an opportune time to use an original weapon. After distributing blue rubber gloves to each member of the student section, members clapped to generate additional noise.

Despite last year's staggering size and passion, the student section dives head first into the endless athletic opportunities which await. No matter the quantity, the group is vital for a thriving sports program and has the ambition necessary for an mighty year.

"I like to think of (the student section) as how water gets really hot at 211 degrees, and at 212 degrees it starts to boil," Updegrove, said. "When it starts to boil...you've got steam coming out and that steam can drive a train. Just steam can run a locomotive, so I think it has a big impact."



4

1. During one the most anticipated matches of the school year, boys' varsity soccer versus Canterbury, students showed their support with a bright, eye-catching white-out theme. 2. Alex Weaver (12) serves hot dogs to fellow spirited peers before a home football game. The tailgates, a newly added custom this year, hope to draw in more students. 3. Christian Hopper (12) and Timothy Eschoff (12) lead the senior boys onto the track, where they celebrated the football team's touchdown. 4. The student section's good vibes extended to Sam Dailey (12) from Columbia City, who was hospitalized after an injury during a game.

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NEWS Following a difficult year, art teacher Sarah Jones is recognized as a top ten finalist for the Indiana state Teacher of the Year Award. 1

OPINION Following the release of popular video game Grand Theft Auto V, writers question the effects of violent video games. 3

LIFE Students take part in the parkour and free running craze sweeping through adolescents across the entire country. 5

SPORTS The opening hockey night against Leo officially begins the boys hockey season with high hopes for its upcoming season. 7

FEATURE Student artists are profiled as they share their past, present, and future art aspirations and their most notable pieces of artwork. 8

Friday, October 4, 2013 | A 2009 Pacemaker Winner | Homestead High School's News Source Since 1969

Student triathlon participation soars

Competition organized by Anne Tiernon grows to include more than 300 participants

Student competitors Sammi Warner (10) and TJ Bishop (10) stretch alongside one another before the beginning of their heat in the Southwest Sprint Triathlon.

By Mallory McCauley
Writer

With a splash of water, a turn of bicycle wheels and a lunge of legs, hundreds of school-aged children participated in the Sprint Triathlon on Sunday, Sept. 25 at Summit Middle School.

Like all triathlons, this event consisted of swimming in the Summit natorium, biking on the Indian Park trails and running on the Summit outdoor track. The competitors, all between the ages of five and 18, completed the event with varying distances determined by age. Different age groups are separated into disciplines. As the age of the discipline increases, so does the distance those participants are required to do.

"(The Triathlon) is at a very beginning level, so we try to keep the distance doable. We want it to be a positive experience," said Anne Tiernon, health and PE teacher, said.

Ted Tiernon, after competing in triathlons for years, inspired his wife to create a triathlon event in which younger aged children could participate in.

"Going to some of (Ted Tiernon's) races, we saw younger kids doing a similar type of thing and we thought it would just be fun for kids," Anne Tiernon said.

Participants spend, in some instances, up to a month training for this triathlon. This helps instill a more active value into their lives. This event was created in order to promote lifetime fitness while allowing children to be

▶ SEE 'TRIATHLON,' PAGE 2

Website carrier updated

By Katie Dunlap
News Editor

The Southwest Allen County Schools' website will be switching providers from RSchoolToday to Schoolwires in order to provide a more modern design for students and other users. This system will be launched around the middle to end of October.

"(The new system) is(...) just a web content management system. It's the software we use to provide information to the general public," Don Chase, Director of Technology, said.

"The look and feel (of the new website) will be much more manageable not only for students but for other users (as well).

DON CHASE
Director of Technology

This update to the website originated because of the outdated design of the previous provider. The transition was made necessary because the browser could not facilitate current applications, such as the school's Twitter feed.

"The existing provider's content, features and capabilities weren't meeting the 21st century tools. We'll be able to include features such as Twitter feeds and a system wide calendar. There will be more menus, such as 'For Parents' and 'For Students,' where there will be links that are primarily used by students,"

▶ SEE 'WEBSITE,' PAGE 2

PHOTO BY REAGAN MIKESELL

Art teacher Sarah Jones receives high state teaching honors

By Megan Cater
Copy Editor

Sarah Jones was announced as SACS district's 2013 Teacher of the Year and was also recognized for her teaching abilities at the state level.

Jones specializes in teaching art classes and inspiring students in Art Club. Aside from her artistic ability, Sarah Jones thrives in her natural approach to teaching and her attitude towards life in general.

Nicole Detter, media specialist, nominated Jones for the Teacher of the Year award last year. Following this nomination, a committee of former Teacher of the Year recipients and administrators decided who was to be selected as the building's teacher of the year. After being chosen, Jones then went on to compete for the district's Teacher of the Year award, receiving the honor over eight other candidates. After being recognized as SACS' Teacher of the Year, Jones decided to apply for the award at the state level. With over 200 school districts in the state, Jones was up for tough competition.

"I think there only ended up being about 50 applicants this year for the state level because it's actually a pretty rigorous process," Jones said. "My application ended up being like 17 pages long because there were so many multifaceted questions."

Jones was selected as one of the top ten applicants statewide. Fellow faculty members view this honor as a likely result of Jones' positive energy and ability to overcome obstacles.

"Last year, Mrs. Jones came and told me that her mom was sick and had cancer, and I felt a kinship with her. My mom died of cancer 10 years ago, and it was really hard for me," Detter said. "We had a lot of similarities between our mothers and our relationships with our mothers(...) I really admired how on days her mom had chemo she would

▶ SEE 'JONES,' PAGE 2

THE LINEUP

The Indiana top ten Teacher of the Year finalists are as follows:

Susan Ament
Sarah Jones
Lauren Kniola
Emily Oberlin
Susan Panzica
Steven Perkins
Kelly Jean Scott
Denise Selm
Meg Strnat
Renee White

SOURCE: DOE.IN.GOV

School evaluation scale to be changed

By Aparna Chintapalli
Writer

40
percent of all Indiana high schools received a "A" rating in 2012 following their state evaluations.

The start of a new school year has brought forth many changes within the entirety of the Southwest Allen County School District. Along with ongoing issues regarding the annual budget plan, student discipline and revisions to curriculum standards, the implementation of a revised A-F accountability system for schools has been under speculation.

A panel of statewide education experts were tasked with creating a new A-F grading system last Thursday, Sept. 19. Superintendent of Public Instruction Glenda Ritz and Southwest Allen County Schools Superintendent Steve Yager co-chaired this meeting of the Accountability System Review Panel. The discussion was conducted under Ritz, Governor Mike Pence, House Speaker Brian Bosma and Senate President Pro Tempore David Long. The panel discussed educational accountability in Indiana, which started back in 1999, taking into consideration the many changes that have occurred over time.

▶ SEE 'EVALUATION SCALE,' PAGE 2

National Merit Semifinalists named

Four senior students receive recognition for PSAT scores

By Ian McKenzie
Writer

From left to right: National Merit Semifinalists Marielle Cabe, Natalie Hawken, Erik Overdahl and Ben Landrigan. These students were amoung the 16,000 students across the country who were also name National Merit Semifinalists.

PHOTO BY WILLIAM WOO

Every year, one momentous morning in mid-October pegs a select few junior students for the chance to gain the honor of being a National Merit Finalist and to secure the substantial scholarship money, in addition to numerous other new opportunities attached to it.

This year, Ben Landrigan, Marielle Cabe, Natalie Hawken and Erik Overdahl, by achieving high ranking Practice SAT (PSAT) scores, have been named National Merit Semifinalists and contenders to be named National Merit Finalists, potential recipients of a $2,500 scholarship. Not only can the students possibly earn a respectable scholarship, but they also reap the benefits awarded by private entities and universities that seek out National Merit Finalists, and perhaps add another key bullet point to their post-secondary resume.

The school as a whole, despite difficult score cutoff points based on a state-by-state demographics analysis, was able to get 10 students some form of recognition from the National Merit Scholarship Corporation.

"The Selection Index Qualifying

▶ SEE 'NATIONAL MERIT,' PAGE 2

BRIEFS

PSAT DAY
Current sophomore and junior students will be taking the PSAT on Oct. 16. Students are highly encouraged to properly prepare for this test as a high score can guarantee multiple future opportunities. Students with an especially high score have the opportunity to receive Nation Merit Scholarships. Additionally, high PSAT scores automatically qualify students to take several dual credit marketing, computer programming, business, communications and psychology classes. These dual credit classes can in turn be used towards an academic honors diploma and may count as college credit .

VISITING COLLEGES
Colleges will be sending admissions representatives to visit with prospective junior and senior students in upcoming days. Students need to register in student services and pick up a college visitation pass at least one day prior to the visit they wish to attend.

NATIONAL MERIT COMMENDED
Six seniors were recently recognized as National Merit Commended Students: Anna Haller, Laura Laudeman, Priscilla Lin, Ian McKenzie, Sahithi Surakanti and Trevor Waldman. These students placed among the top 5 percent of the 1.5 million students who took the 2012 PSAT.

HONOR ROLL CERTIFICATES
All honor roll recipients for the 2012-2013 Spring semester will be receiving their certificate and a cookie during lunch on Tuesday, Oct. 8 in the cafeteria. Anyone who is unsure as to whether or not they qualified for honor roll should contact their advisor or counselor prior to Oct. 8.

▶EVALUATION SCALE CONTINUED FROM 1

The main goal of the meeting focused on moving Indiana from its current A-F accountability system to a new grading structure that emphasizes individual student growth and improvement.

Starting with the 2011-12 academic year, the State Board of Education adopted the use of a new methodology for determining a school or corporation's grade, the A-F system. The current A-F accountability system in Indiana gives parents, students, educators and communities a concise assessment of how well their schools are doing. Annually, the Indiana Department of Education and the State Board of Education calculate letter grades for schools, directly paralleling their performance. The purpose of this system is to better measure and report school performance each year as required by state law. The A-F system primarily reflects each school's and the district's most recent academic performance on state standardized tests such as ISTEP and ECA. Factors such as graduation rate, college and career readiness and improvement rates are also taken into consideration to determine letter grades. Over time, however, this accountability system has sparked many controversies.

Former Indiana Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Bennett was accused of manipulating the A-F grading system through political affiliations, an accusation that spurred the idea for change.

"The whole A-F accountability system is devised by a complicated formula, which is hard to interpret," Keith Potter, AP Government Teacher, said. "From the Tony Bennett controversy where school performance was increased, to other instances where schools were degraded by only some minor test scores, this system has showed that there is much ambiguity behind it."

> "If a student is important, (...) the student's improvement should positively reflect on the school."
>
> **PARK GINDER**
> *Principal*

Defying the current A-F system, Fort Wayne Community Schools (FWCS) have decided to no longer use this statewide performance system to determine their schools' achievements. With the approval of the school board intact, these schools have geared themselves towards another path: the Balanced Scoreboard system. FWCS argued within their resolution to the school board that the Bennett A-F system is corrupt and ultimately not a legitimate method to assess school performance.

"Although I am not negatively affected by the A-F system at Homestead, I think that revisions should be made in order to create a less confusing accountability system that considers the best interest of statewide schools," Madelyn Kartman (11) said. The general opinion over the A-F system reflects the idea of unifying schools throughout the state to limit complications and the abuse of power.

"What many of us argue for is recognizing the growth of the individual student," Park Ginder, principal, said. "If a student is important, regardless of his or her socioeconomic status or region of state, the student's improvement should positively reflect on the school, and at the same time, high performing schools shouldn't be penalized for minor levels of failure."

Many officials claim that the A-F letter grade system is solely based upon student scores on standardized tests, overlooking demographic factors that affect those scores. The emphasis on reform has shaped the concerns of administrators and education facilitators.

The Accountability System Review Panel is in the process of discussing the A-F system; it will give non-binding recommendations by Nov. 1 to the State Board of Education, which is charged with making final decisions and putting the new system in place in the 2014-15 school year.

▶WEBSITE CONTINUED FROM 1

Chase said.

The new program enables the use of many new features that were not available with RSchool, such as the option to change the default language. Schoolwires also allows students to use a single sign on. Since students need to log on to multiple systems such as MyBigCampus and PowerSchool, this application enables them to simply log on once and have access to all of their systems.

"Once a student logs into the website, they will be able to click on the link to those systems that will automatically provide them access without the need to log in again. It might take several weeks to get many of them working, so we'll start with the most common and add systems throughout the school year," Chase said.

The design of the new website will be dramatically different, as the overall setup has been altered. Navigability is greatly increased with a simplified menu and options such as Headlines, Upcoming Events and Trending Now. Like the existing website, every school's site will have a similar layout, except each school will be designed with their own individual school colors.

"The look and feel will be much more manageable not only for students but for other users (as well). We're really focused on MyBigCampus, so all of that information and data will be available on this site," Chase said.

Despite the plethora of design changes, the content available currently will remain on the new website. More information will be accessible, such as a frequently updated calendar of school events. Students primarily use the site to open their network folders and PowerSchool, and these aspects of the website will not change.

"I use the website to check my grades and to (track) whether they're going up or down. I'll continue to use it to look on PowerSchool after the change," Skylar Duggins(10) said.

Generally, the new site will not require too much of a transition for student and parent users.

"When I first heard that the administration was going to make changes to the website, I thought it would be hard for students to adjust. Now that I understand their main task at hand is to improve the website, I am all for it," Erik Elstor (11) said.

The administration hopes that these innovations will streamline the website and allow users to find more information with a greater amount of ease and efficiency.

"The organization will be clean and neat," Chase said, "We're looking for that modern design. We're hoping that people will be able to find information much easier."

▶Why?

The previous provider's tools were not meeting the needs of the 21st century, and therefore limiting the full potential of the site.

The Joy of Teaching

"I haven't met a student that she doesn't care about and encourages everyone to be their best in and outside of art class."

REAGAN COOK (12)
Student

"She gives each student her all every day (...) Someday I hope to have a strong influence in someone else's life like she has had in mine."

ELLY WOOD (11)
Student

"Mrs. Jones' passion for life and her profession is evident every day and it helps students enjoy (...) her class."

STEPHANIE MERKLING
Teacher

"Mrs. Jones is a rare soul - she has the unexplainable personality that surrounds you with love and joy."

GABBY HOLLMAN (11)
Student

Mrs. Sarah Jones

"She is more than a figure who teaches ar to pubescent teenagers. She is the peacemaker, the therapist, and the best friend."

TAMMY DO ('13)
Former Student

"She really reignited my passion for art. Her attitude was infectious, and being in her class was the highlight of my day."

RYLIE READ (10)
Student

"I think what I like most about when I visit her classroom is she gives all students the confidence to be artists."

SUSAN SUMMERS
Assistant Principal

"She's always there if you need someone to talk to and also she's nice, understanding, and always has great advice."

TYLER MULHALL (11)
Student

▶JONES CONTINUED FROM 1

dress up in glittery clothes and hand out Joy instead of falling apart."

In the case of Jones, joy does not just refer to positive vibes. Joy for Jones was a phrase coined as Jones stood in the hallways during passing periods with a box of inspirational quotes, handing them out as students passed by.

"It was just an idea that sparked from a lot of the negative talk and people just being lackluster (and) not being happy about things," Jones said. "There's a bigger world out there to think about. The days that my mom had chemo are the days that I would hand out the joy, just to counteract those negative feelings I was coming to school with and the emotion behind it."

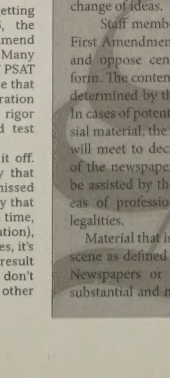

PHOTO BY REAGAN MIKESELL

Students often comment on Jones' ability to connect on a personal level. Her classroom is recognized as a positive setting in which students can express themselves both artistically and emotionally.

"I've had Mrs. Jones as my art teacher and my friend ever since my freshman year. She has just been through so much this year with losing her mother to cancer and still coming to school every day and being everything she can be for her students," Nina Gerber (12) said. "She makes her class as joyful as possible: blowing bubbles, saying loud good mornings and passing out candy and Joy to her students. She is one of the strongest people I know."

Jones has recognized the great honor that this nomination represents.

"I'm just over the moon (about the nomination); I'm ecstatic," Jones said. "I just stepped back from the situation and thought 'Wow this is a pretty big deal'; someone recognized what I do and what I love in this very real and public way and that's pretty incredible."

Along with Jones' students, Jones' coworkers feel her recognition was more than deserved, her passion an inspiration to those around her.

"I really feel like she exemplifies what we try to teach kids which is (that) it's not the circumstances that define you, it's how you handle and react to the circumstances that happen in your life," Detter said. "She just wants to make people have a better day and a better life."

▶TRIATHLON CONTINUED FROM 1

surrounded by their peers in a non-competitive atmosphere.

"It's a really fun time, it's just so easy going and fun...it keeps me active training for it," Sammi Warner (10) said.

The goal of this triathlon is to leave kids feeling positive, rather than beaten down. Participants are neither timed nor awarded for the event. To put it simply, the goal isn't to "kill the kids," as Anne Tiernon said.

"I had a great time from the training to finishing. I loved the whole thing and it's all for a great cause," TJ Bishop (10) said.

The first Sprint Triathlon was in 2001, and following that there have been eight years in which the event was held.

"We did (the triathlon for) a couple years, and then took several off. We started up again four years ago," Anne Tiernon said.

After this year's race was completed, participants were given a shirt and food to eat following their strenuous workout. Although the weather was not ideal for the outdoor sections of this triathlon, participants muddled through.

"The weather didn't really affect me. The biking and running portions were easier, but swimming was tough," Warner said.

This event has drawn back participants year after year, however, there are still newcomers to the race who hold high praises

"I didn't know what to expect...I was extremely nervous, but right when I hit the water it was all back to normal," Bishop said.

In the first year, there were only 50 participants. With progressive growth, this number jumped to 300 participants purely due to word of mouth. Gaining recognition for its positive philosophies, the Sprint Triathlon has gained numerous prominent sponsors.

The lasting effect of this event has not been limited to its participants. The $17 required dues and all other proceeds go to Fort Wayne Trails and the YMCA Strong Kids Program. Over the years, the Sprint Triathlon has accumulated thousands of dollars to contribute to these organizations.

"(The triathlon) is a huge deal. It has grown so much. We never dreamed it would have become what it is," Anne Tiernon said.

▶NATIONAL MERIT CONTINUED FROM 1

of 240) this year, which is much higher than in years past," Amy Hamilton, guidance counselor, said. "The Homestead community is very proud of our four Semifinalists and six Commended students.

Initially, some of the Semifinalists felt the additional pressure of another application on top of mounting college applications and schoolwork, but being one out of the 16,000 who earned the opportunity to move on with the scholarship application process, they quickly realized the opportunity at hand.

"Honestly, my first reaction was 'why do I have to fill another application out?' There are a lot of things going on right now, and I didn't really want to deal with it," Ben Landrigan (12) said. "But, after those thoughts, I remembered that I've had a family member in the past get a National Merit Scholarship, and I see the huge help I can get financially."

Now, the Semifinalists move forward with the application process, hoping to be named one of the 15,000 finalists that in turn will be selected for the actual scholarships based on a number of criteria: the school's curricula and grading system, two sets of test scores, the high school official's written recommendation, information about the student's activities and leadership and the Finalist's own essay, according to the National Merit Scholarship Corporation website.

"Now, we fill out one more application. That includes one of those open-ended essay prompts in addition to a few other (compilations of school and test score records)," Landrigan said. "After that, things are out of our hands and, hopefully, we wait for the good news."

Though a few of the applicants are all but set on their post-secondary destinations, they do acknowledge the alleviation of financial burden that could come as a result of the scholarship.

"While I wouldn't say that whether or not I get this scholarship will change the course of my college decision, the additional financial support is always welcome," Marielle Cabe (12) said.

For upcoming juniors getting ready to test on Oct. 16, the Semifinalists simply recommend that students do their best. Many are told of the importance of PSAT testing day, but there are those that are blind to the ample preparation and only see the three hour rigor that a practice standardized test presents.

"I'd say just don't blow it off. There is a great opportunity that many of my classmates missed last year because they felt lazy that day," Cabe said. "At the same time, if you don't get (the nomination), keep things in perspective. Yes, it's scholarship money and as a result it has great value, but if you don't get it, there are plenty of other opportunities to pursue."

FROM THE TOP

- **1.5** million students took the 2012 PSAT
- **34** thousand commended scholars
- **16** thousand semifinalists
- **15** thousand finalists
- **8** thousand scholarship winners

SOURCE: NATIONALMERIT.ORG

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ETHAN YDE

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Staff members support the First Amendment in its entirety and oppose censorship in any form. The content of the paper is determined by the student staff. In cases of potentially controversial material, the Editorial Board will meet to decide the content of the newspaper. The staff will be assisted by the adviser in areas of professional ethics and legalities.

Material that is libelous or obscene as defined by Fort Wayne Newspapers or could cause a substantial and material disruption of the school day as defined by the Supreme Court will not be printed.

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Public input will be accepted from the Homestead community in the form of letters to the editor. Letters must follow standards concerning libel or obscenity. Those that could cause a substantial and material disruption to the school day will not be printed. Letters can be e-mailed to The Spartana at thespartana@gmail.com

free runners, 4

PHOTO BY ALLIE NELSON

Rising tuition urges students to pursue jobs with smaller amounts of training

By Katie Maher
Writer

As Americans, we value education, and know college is something people from all walks of life aspire to attend; it's all part of the American Dream for a better life. However, this all begs the question: is going to college really worth it in these changing times?

Of course, college is now ridiculously more expensive than in recent years. To go to Indiana University on an in-state tuition, a student should expect paying around $10,000 a year. But out of state tuition to IU costs $30,000 a year. Multiply that by four, the total for a four-year degree for an out-of-state student at IU would amount to $120,000.

In Feb. 2012, President Obama urged Americans to tail at least one year of schooling after high school. He said a full four years is not needed. Studies on usnews.com support Obama's ideas, suggesting that a four-year degree isn't exactly necessary.

By the year 2018, it is suspected there will be 14 million jobs available which will require more than a high school diploma, but less than a college diploma.

Not just low-paying jobs, well-paying jobs as well will require this type of schooling. In some cases, a graduate of a two-year community college makes more in a lifetime than one in a four-year school because of having the advantage of a head start in the workforce.

A 2012 poll conducted by the Gallup and the Lumina Foundation found that around half of recent graduates have jobs that do not even require a college education. Even more alarming, the Center for College Affordability and Productivity found this past year approximately half of all college graduates, not just recent, hold what would be considered relatively low-paying and low-skilled jobs. If these people are doing their dream job, was it worth attending college when they could have done what they wanted without a $40,000-$120,000 bill?

> "Although it is great that Obama wants everyone to receive a higher education, the goal does not account for the fact that college is not meant for everyone."
>
> **KATIE MAHER**

Although it is great that Obama wants everyone to receive a higher education, the goal does not account for the fact that college is not meant for everyone. Some people really cannot handle the pressure of a university, or might not even be interested in school at all. Everyone should have the right to advance in education, but it should not exactly be stressed as a necessity.

College might not make everyone a millionaire, but it does change peoples' perspectives--no matter where their diploma is received. A college student might be able to handle stress better or be more efficient in their work than their less-educated peers, but that, again, depends on the field they are working in.

If a person plans to join a workforce that is not considered highly stressful and does not need an extra four years to pick up on a skill they have interest in, then there is no reason to put in the extra stress, time and money associated with college. During those four years, the person could be earning a salary instead of wasting time and ultimately, money.

So is college worth it? It depends on what a person aspires to do, and if they deem it worthy to pay for the costs of those aspirations. Changes in the job market over time are inevitable, and a higher education is a component of success that must be looked at in a different light than before.

twitter take

The Spartana will attempt to capture the most impulsive responses on Twitter. @TheSpartana

Question: "What would you do to get into your dream school?"

@its_BENawhile - Ben Schwartz (11) ▶ "Steal candy from a baby."

@RyWade1995 - Ryan Wade (12) ▶ "Maybe try not to look ratchet every day."

@cup - Tim Eshcoff (12) ▶ "Violate the dress code."

@_samanthug_ - Sam deCaro (11) ▶ "Give up all the Klondike bars. All of em."

@WeaviesBaby - Alex Weaver (12) ▶ "Anything but homework."

@makeit_Quick - Kate Quick (12) ▶ "Run out on the football field in the middle of the play. Ask the ref for a piggyback ride."

@hamilfun - Matt Hamilton (11) ▶ "Spoil the Breaking Bad ending to those who haven't watched it."

Possible violence tests gun policy

Bomb threats at local high schools highlight necessary weapon law changes

By Colby Shoup
Writer

The increasingly troubling plague of violence spreading across America has reached Fort Wayne Community Schools in the form of a bomb threat found on Sept. 17 at South Side High School This threat, among other violent events, clearly identifies that changes need to be made in order to keep our communities safe.

Police said the threat at South Side was made in the form of a note which claimed that a bomb would explode at 7:45 at Wayne, Northrop, North Side and South Side high schools. As a result of this, all four schools were searched and Wayne and South Side were evacuated. Fortunately, the threats were not legitimate and no bombs were found.

Fourteen years ago, the idea of an actual bombing occurring in a Fort Wayne Community school would have seemed extremely far-fetched, but after the April 20, 1999 Columbine High School massacre, the idea of such an event seems as realistic as horrifyingly possible. The idea of this happening seems even more probable after the violent events last year at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Connecticut. This begs the question, what can we, as a nation, do to ensure threats like this are not so common and that actual bombings and shootings stop becoming a common occurrence?

Eradicating personal weapons, nor keeping them, would solve the violence problem in this country efficiently, so the best solution is a combination of the two.

The government should not ban all powerful weapons in America, but at the same time they should make it much harder to get weapons. This could be done by expanding the amount of paperwork required to register for gun ownership. This would satisfy both liberals and conservatives, because conservatives with clean records and no persons with a history of insanity will get to keep their guns and liberals will be satisfied with the fact that weapons will only be in the hands of those who can truly handle them.

> ▶98
> percent of bomb threats in U.S. schools are false.
>
> SOURCE: CLOOKLINE.COM

In other words, the best solution to our nation's problem with violence is compromise between the two political extremes. Especially in the recent arguments the two parties have had regarding weapon control, it seems the two have no concept of the word compromise. Because of this, it looks as though the problem may never get better, and the horrible violence will only stop in an ideal America where elected officials actually put human lives before politics.

Although the threats were not carried out, the bomb threat scare in the Fort Wayne Community Schools shook the city and created a response further questioning the law on weapons throughout the country.

CARTOON BY EMILY SPATT

'Grand Theft Auto' stirs heated dispute over laws restricting teen entertainment

By Ethan Yde
Writer

Although many parents would like to believe that keeping their child away from crime in video games will shape him or her into a better person, there happens to be no proof in support of this theory.

With the recent release of Grand Theft Auto V, an open-world game in which players explore the streets of Los Santos and work with buddies to pull off criminal acts, the ancient conflict of suggestive content in video games has arisen once again.

> "It is true that revealing the imperfections of the world to a child around ten or under could desensitize them in years to come, but if an adolescent has their hands on such a game, it should be taken lightly."
>
> **ETHAN YDE**

The hype from angry and concerned parents has had people thinking: is it appropriate to allow children to have access to violent video games? That depends on what is meant by "children." It is true that revealing the imperfections of the world to a child around ten or under could desensitize them in years to come, but if an adolescent has their hands on such a game, it should be taken lightly.

Teenagers and adults can handle the graphic and sometimes disturbing content in Grand Theft Auto V, because they already have intellectual maturity. Simply seeing something occur virtually, of which they already have knowledge on, is not going to influence a person's mindset in the long run. As long as they grow up knowing what is right and wrong, people will not repeat the criminal acts pictured in many popular games.

Furthermore, suggestive game franchises such as Fallout, Gears of War and Grand Theft Auto have not proven to be causing any increase in child violence. In fact, violent crimes from ages 12 to 15 have actually been cut in half since 1995, according to a study from the United States Department of Justice. Games rated "Mature" by the Entertainment Software Rating Board were on the rise during this time. It only further proves that there could even be an inverse correlation between mature video games and youth crimes.

Could it be true that the theory brought up by the recent horror movie "The Purge" is correct? This would mean that allowing all hatred to exit the body at once may decrease further crimes. It very well may be possible that placing all anger and stress into the virtual worlds of gaming will decrease aggressiveness in real-life situations. Sometimes, after a long day at school, a teen needs to escape into Grand Theft Auto's Los Santos, The Elder Scrolls' Skyrim, or even the relaxed world of Minecraft.

Just as one feels rewarded after scoring a goal or winning a race, the same feeling comes from completing a mission or conquering a level of a video game. When a human senses accomplishment, the neurotransmitter dopamine is released, causing a sense of happiness and worthiness to be released from the brain.

It may seem silly, but games are even proven to help cope with self-esteem issues. Take that, mom. The eyes of elementary students should be shielded from many games, Grand Theft Auto V being one of them.

I understand that it would make any sane parent nervous to see his or her child playing a game in which they are killing prostitutes, getting drunk at night clubs and robbing banks. It is certainly not something to expose to an innocent child's eyes.

That being said, video games can still provide teenagers and adults, who can maturely handle the game, with an outlet to relieve stress and have fun, while participating in shenanigans that would not be acceptable in real life.

Lack of Pledge participants concerning

The Ed Board

Priscilla Lin	*Jessica Tebben*
William Ngo	*Katie Dunlap*
Allie Nelson	*Kylie Poling*
Haiden Steingass	*Megan Cater*

The intercom crackles alive with the long-since memorized phrase: "Good morning, Homestead; please stand for the Pledge."

While the Pledge of Allegiance is repeated over the loud speaker, there is silence from many students. Once it's completed, students hear: "Now for a Moment of Silence." Hushed whispers erupt all across the room. What was once silence for thoughts and remembrances is now dissonant chatter.

When asked why they choose not to say the Pledge, most students will say that they are "too lazy" or that it is "too much effort."

Well, then answer me this: What would happen if our servicemen and women were lazy or did not feel like exerting too much energy?

Most of the excuses students provide are cowardly and unjustified. These students who do not say the Pledge of Allegiance for these reasons are arbitrary and exhibit a key problem with modern American society: laziness.

The men and women who fight in our armed services deserve our respect, especially during the Pledge and Moment of Silence. Those two daily tasks are in honor of them, in honor of our country and all of those who have died and served to protect it.

Many of our school's students have family members or know someone in the military, and yet, we disrespect them daily, alongside our country, by remaining silent on an issue that should never have even occurred in the first place.

However, despite this, some may have valid arguments against not saying the Pledge. They do not know what it means. They do not believe in God, and thus they do not want to say, "one nation under God," which is an addition to the Pledge added in 1954. They are exercising their First Amendment freedoms by choosing to say, and not say, what they want. All of these are valid reasons for staying silent while every other high school, and school for that matter, in America recites the Pledge--being lazy is not.

If a student is not going to say the Pledge of Allegiance, he or she should have a well-thought out and valid purpose in doing so. Even though there is a school rule stating the statement is not obligatory, students should want to recite the Pledge.

Not only should the speech seem like an obligation, if students participate, the Pledge should be recited with meaning. If students cannot find a reason to live in America, the Pledge is not the problem.

Students should not stay silent during the Pledge because their friends are silent too, or because their voice is too loud. Speak up. Let everyone know that you are proud to be an American citizen, that you are proud of your country.

Teachers should speak up, too. Faculty needs to be loud and clear as well; they need to lead their class in this single daily act of patriotism. In these times, the country needs it. We need patriotism. Just think: what would Captain America do?

Say the Pledge. Be informed. And for goodness sake, do not be among the lazy few that let "being cool" overrule doing what is right.

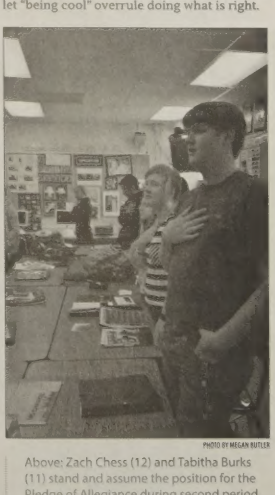

PHOTO BY MEGAN BUTLER

Above: Zach Chess (12) and Tabitha Burks (11) stand and assume the position for the Pledge of Allegiance during second period.

PHOTO BY CHRISTINA JESSE

Johnny Appleseed Festival band booth prospers

Dedication of volunteers, support from parents provides environment for most profitable year in stand's history

BY JESSICA TEBBEN
Writer

The perfect kickoff to fall is none other than Fort Wayne's annual Johnny Appleseed Festival, which is the past-meets-present hot spot for good food and good fun.

This past September, Fort Wayne's famous festival celebrated its forty-year anniversary. The Johnny Appleseed Festival began in 1974 and has grown from 20 vendors to about 200. One of the most popular of the myriad vendors is the band's chicken and dumplings booth.

This year, band manager Kim Brown believes that the band booth may have made the largest profit in their 13-year history of vending at the festival. Each year, the volunteers increase the numbers of kettles and chicken and dumplings they make to sell, and this year's number was a record high. And they sold everything they had.

"(During) the actual production (of) the festival, we are working non-stop until we run out of food," Natalie Hawken (12) said.

The hard work that members of the band put into working the booth aid in its smooth production; however, band volunteers have more help than just each other. The parents are the major benefactors to them when it comes to set-up and production, as well as volunteering.

"We get a lot of support from the parent volunteers," Hawken said. "They pre-make all of the dough and the vegetables and everything on the Thursday night before (the festival)."

The Johnny Appleseed booth would not run quite as smoothly without extra help from Key Club. Since the band had a competition on Saturday, members of Key Club volunteered to take over. However, the band made it back in time on Sunday to aid in the booth's success.

"We are a family and it's (satisfying) seeing the whole band family come together and work toward this goal of helping the band program," Brown said.

The proceeds from the booth go toward lowering band fees. Brown hopes to make it so that every student who is interested has the chance to be in band, and believes that smaller fees will help that cause.

Although a lot of work goes into making the band's booth amazing, its raging popularity is mostly thanks to the famous food and the authenticity it brings to the Johnny Appleseed Festival.

People come from far and wide to have a taste of the band's chicken and dumplings made by the volunteers, who all wear authentic Pioneer costumes.

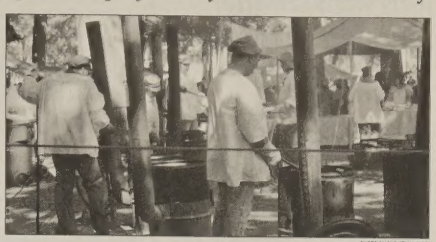

PHOTO BY CHRISTINA JESSE

Adult volunteers stir ingredients over a fire to prepare food for the vending tables at festival. The steps necessary to complete the cooking process were given to people of all ages from different voountering organizations.

"We go lots of talk about people who will wait in line for half-an-hour just to get the chicken dumplings," Hawken said. "They'll come from, you know, hours away, just (for our) booth."

As people come for the chicken and dumplings, they discover just how much fun the Johnny Appleseed Festival is and begin to explore their surroundings, thus bettering the festival as a whole.

"It brings so many people to the band (booth) to support (it) and, (after) buying stuff for the band, they can go around to the other booths and buy stuff from other people," Regan O'Shaughnessy (10) said.

However, for band members and other volunteers, the famous band booth is more than just chicken and dumplings and authenticity. It creates an aura of family ties and brings the members of the band together for a good cause.

"I felt like it was really fun because you got a new experience, and you got to hang out with some of your friends while helping the band," O'Shaughnessy said.

PHOTOS BY ALLIE NELSON

Free running, parkour gather student interest, serve as attraction to those seeking non-competitive pastime

BY SYDNEY ISROFF
Writer

Taking advantage of the outdoors can be presented as a challenge for most students; however, this is not the case for those who relish in places of opporunity to practice their unique pastime.

Free-running, a branch of parkour, has taken flight as a not-so-leisurely activitiy. Parkour is simply the sport of trveling a distance and dodging obstacles in the quickest, most efficient method acheivable. Parkour, specifically, is a version of free running incorporating acrobatics and style.

This non-competitive sport was developed in the late 1980s and has been growing in popularity since. Participants usually find a group of fellow free-runners and set out to any appropriate area.

Although primarily used for good fun and entertainment, this activity also doubles as an intense workout. The sport utilizes every muscle in the body, but also makes working out a little more bearable.

Student acrobat Chad Childers (12) practices free running only while Mike Pennetta (12) enjoys a little of both. While he appreciates the simplicity of free running, Pennetta is also attracted to parkour's aesthetic appeal.

"I decided (to start free running) because it's a really good form of exercise and it's a good community," Pennetta said. "There isn't a lot of competition in it. It's more just like friendly rivalries."

There is no professional level of the sport, so most look at it as a way to stay in shape and do something they enjoy. It is, however, possible to acquire sponsors.

Free-running is easy in the sense there are little location limitations.

Starting in a backyard and ending in the playground, anywhere with an elevated surface could be used to partake in parkour. Generally, participants can be found in a nearby park or playground, which are ideal places for flips and jumps.

"The great thing about free-running is it can basically be done anywhere," Chad Childers (12) said.

Fans of the sport are not only the runners, but also the self-proclaimed student fans who enjoy watching the amazing athletes.

"I think it is really awesome to see these guys using their bodies to jump and flip in ways I didn't even know was possible," Miranda Gidley (12) said.

Nothing about this intense sport is easy, however, and, due to the precision needed to perform the tricks, injury is a recurring issue.

Whether it be jumping over a railing or flipping off a wall, these free-runners have figured out a way to develop their skills to elevate their level. Although it may not be an easy task, these participants have devoted time and effort to reach the different levels of parkour.

"The coolest trick I can do is an inward wall flip," Childers said.

Childers has been free-running since the fifth grade, and continues to do so on a regular basis.

Although the free-runners express their love for the sport, they admit that it is far from easy to learn and may be frustrating at times, especially for beginners.

"(Parkour is) a very difficult sport to learn. It takes a lot of strength and precision," Pennetta said.

The athletes continue to claim that all the frustration is worth it in the end.

"Stick with it. At times it does get frustrating and you have to not give up on it," Pennetta said.

TUMBLING TRANSFORMATION

After free running for a little over a year, Pennetta realizes the sport has not only impacted him physically, but has made him more efficient. Now more agile, he appreciates the effects of the sport. The change in himself free running has induced is pressure-free; Pennetta has enjoyed his activity dedication.

Top: Mike Pennetta (12) flips over the school entrance sign, and finishes the jump with rolls once reaching the ground. Before a challenging trick, tumbling is his warm up.

Fall television series begin premieres for new seasons

Primary episodes motivate watchers to remain interested, informed of developing plots unfolding in returning terms

BY SARAH CAMINO
Writer

It's autumn; the television springs to life as it falls into a weekly routine of convoluted dramas, comedies that make you question your taste in humor and manufactured reality shows.

The Walking Dead will return featuring zombies more recently reanimated than BBC drama Sherlock; Supernatural will burrow into layers of flannel and emotional plot twists; NCIS will lose Agent Ziva David; Teen Wolf will further diverge from its 1985 source material starring Michael J. Fox, whose new sitcom should undoubtedly feature a flux capacitor cameo and students will watch their childhoods shatter as Bill Nye the Science Guy learns to Samba on Dancing with the Stars. Audiences are drinking it in like Starbucks' seasonal Pumpkin Spice Lattes.

"I like to see how cinematography, directing and writing come together. You can really tell if someone knows what they're doing when a show comes out well," sci-fi fan Drake White (11) said.

White particularly enjoys Doctor Who, a science fiction series on BBC, that began in the 1960's.

Fun fact: by this Christmas, Peter Capaldi will become the 12th actor to portray The Doctor.

"I'm really looking forward to finding out how (Steven) Moffat (a writer) writes Peter Capaldi as the Doctor," White said. "Every (doctor) is always a little different."

> "I like to see how cinematography, directing and writing come together."
>
> **DRAKE WHITE (11)**
> *Sci-fi Fan*

Once Upon A Time spinoff, Once Upon a Time in Wonderland; Sleepy Hollow, a modern interpretation of the famous legend, and Almost Human, a futuristic crime drama from director J.J. Abrams, will make their debut this fall, competing to become long-term entertainment.

"When I start looking for a show, I look for something that's exciting and plays with a different idea every episode," Supernatural fan Jillian Bilbrey (11) said. "I like Supernatural because it's a really interesting idea."

Famed comedians, Robin Williams and Michael J. Fox also nabbed timeslots for the new sitcoms, The Crazy Ones and The Michael J. Fox Show, respectively.

"I love comedy because laughter is important. It's like a pick-me-up," Kelsi Brown (10), regular New Girl viewer, said.

Notably, Joss Whedon's Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D. attracted the most viewers ages 18-49 in its Tuesday, Sept. 24 time slot according to New York Daily News, likely due to its close affiliation with 2012 summer blockbuster, The Avengers.

Dramas, like Supernatural, Nashville, Revenge, Scandal and Pretty Little Liars, also remain popular among students. These suspenseful shows often return for Halloween.

"I like the country life, so (Nashville) connects me to that aspect of myself," Brown said. "Watching TV gives you the drama that you don't need in your life, but you kind of crave anyways."

In Supernatural, both character dynamic and action packed episodes attract a wide fan base.

"I'm really looking forward to season 9 (in Supernatural) because characters from previous seasons are coming back, and I love the character development," Bilbrey said. "I'm excited to see how everyone interacts."

Regardless of their preference in shows, students always care about the quality of entertainment.

"(TV) has to feel natural," White said. "There has to be content, there has to be variety. It can't just have random explosions."

Student should carefully manage procrastination

It's getting to be that time of year again. Perhaps you haven't had any motivation from the beginning, but I know I'm beginning to lose any willingness I ever had to get things done early.

It always happens in September, October if you're lucky. You've done so well keeping up with assignments.

You even got that one English essay finished two days in advance or you completed your notecards the night they were assigned.

But alas, your bright-eyed and innocent vigor is coming to an end.

Correct me if I'm wrong, but the third month of school is when everything starts going downhill. Teachers start to post grades through PowerSchool, and the homework load gets about ten million times heavier, give or take a few thousand pounds.

To put things in simpler terms, things get hard. You get busy. And you just don't feel like doing it. It begins with an overly optimistic view on the upcoming year. This year is going to be amazing, right?

Isn't it your year to change and make everyone love you and become superhot? Of course it is!

JESS SAYIN'

BY JESSICA TEBBEN
Life Editor

Also, you're going to be really organized and get all your homework done early. And on top of that, you're going to get good grades. Actually, more than good grades; you're going to get perfect grades.

Shoot for the moon. Even if you miss, you still have that extra credit from the beginning of the year to hold your grades up for a while.

After you miss the moon, you will probably land in a state of frustrated confusion. This is the part where you actually start to slack on your homework.

It's sort of like running really fast and trying to stop, but instead you stumble for a while and eventually fall on your face. This is the stumbling part.

This is the part where you kind of work on your homework early, but then you stop and leave the rest for the last minute.

This is also the part where you fall behind on the reading for that long, tedious English book you were assigned, and when you try to catch up, you fall behind again.

You do five minutes of homework and then reward yourself with a two-hour break. Suddenly, you're doing more television-watching than homework-doing. You tell yourself you're going to stop, but we both know that you aren't.

From personal experience, this is also the part where you start taking naps all the time.

So as you stumble through this chaotic, but far from foreign, state-of-mind, you start falling. You know you're going to hit the ground, and you know you're going to hit it hard, but you don't know when.

As you wade through the homework assignments piling up around your ankles, you begin to panic. Why is everything due on the same day? How is it already midnight?

And suddenly you're lying face down in a puddle of tears. Those 300 pages you had to read and those two essays you had to write last week are probably what pushed you over the edge.

Or maybe it was the fact you waited so long to do your homework. Either way, you've hit rock bottom.

Now, you decide, getting stuff done early is not how it's going to be, even though it made you feel really good about yourself in the beginning.

You're going to write three paragraphs, do ten notecards and read two-hundred pages all before fourth period. You're going to hate it like you did last year and the year before, but it's going to happen anyway. Believe me.

Thus, with a fall from the moon onto the floor of your bedroom, a professional procrastinator is born.

You will do absolutely anything to get out of doing your homework. Last night I decided I wanted to fix my car, just so I could get out of doing homework.

As for doing last-minute work, you've probably done that your whole life. Don't worry about it.

But a word of warning to those of you who haven't taken the plunge from greatness: do everything and anything humanly possible to balance yourself on top of that moon and never leave until you graduate.

> "Thus, with a fall from the moon onto the floor of your bedroom, a professional procrastinator is born."
>
> **JESSICA TEBBEN**

Because, though your relationship with procrastination is inevitable, it's also unhealthy and it makes you feel really, really bad..

And for those of you who are like me and are already drained of your motivation, I say good luck. Don't do anything stupid. And don't sleep so much. And don't wait too long to write that essay.

If you feel like you're about to fall on your face, think of all the reasons you should keep running. It makes you less stressed. It gives you more time to sleep. It makes you happier.

Don't be that one person with bags under your eyes because you saved that one homework assignment for midnight. In other words, don't be like me.

But if you do fall on your face, do it with grace. If you read all the way to this sentence, you'll do great.

There's No Place Like Homecoming

PHOTO BY GABBY HOLLMAN

Spirit Week a success between students, tailgate makes debut

BY AWBREI VACHON
Writer

Despite the school's motto "Fear the Spartans," during Spirit Week there was no such fear throughout the hallways but rather good attitudes and good old fun.

The long and well-known tradition of Spirit Week had been bringing students together for decades, giving them a reason to look forward to school for at least five days out of the required 180.

"Part (of the point of Spirit Week) is to let kids express themselves throughout the year because I think school can be kind of bare sometimes," Tyler Strunk (11) said. "You get to dress up like a goober and do whatever you want to and just have a good time."

To kick off the week full of school support and high spirits, Paige Eakright (10) dressed up as the renowned Captain America for Monday's America day.

"I think I'll look back on what I wore and I'll probably say 'why the heck did I wear that,'" Eakright said. "You only get four Spirit Weeks your entire high school (experience so) you might as well just go all out (and) just have fun with it."

Strunk, on the other hand, with this year offering him a third round of homecoming spirit, decided to go above and beyond for Tuesday's theme, tourist day.

He rummaged together about as much tourist-like impedimenta as he could find around the house and walked around school looking like a genuine tourist.

"I actually used real sunscreen on my nose, unlike everybody else who just used fake paint," Strunk said. "You could really tell I was going all out for it."

Likewise, twin day brought just as many great turnouts, including a group of kids walking around in eccentric banana hats and a duo wearing hot dog costumes, as well as other odd attires.

"My first idea was to get two baby dolls and strap them to my chest and they would be twins," Thomas (Chip) Herendeen (10) said. "I couldn't find another baby so I just took the one I had (and) strapped it to my chest."

Wearing his life-guarding suit and a grey t-shirt, Herendeen resorted to cutting a similar outfit out of rags and dressing the baby with it, resulting in a rather unique twin pair.

In addition to the aforementioned theme days, student government planned both a throwback Thursday and a camouflage day. Throwback Thursday brought in flocks of peace bandanas, leg warmers, pigtails and suspenders, whereas camo day brought in herds of greens and browns.

Of course, there are always those kids who claim dressing up is a waste of time and an embarrassment to the student body as a whole.

"If you don't want to have a fun time during school the one week that you can express yourself and go against all the school (spirit), then it's your loss," Strunk said.

This year, in comparison to last, the students felt like Spirit Week was a bigger hit and more people participated because the themes were easier to dress up for, but outfit ideas were not the only thing which changed this year.

Student government also decided to change the Homecoming dance to a Homecoming tailgate instead.

"I think (the tailgate) is a really good idea," Shelby Harkness (11) said. "I definitely think it should be better planned with more activities."

This being the first year for the tailgate, students did not quite know what to expect.

After the fact, however, students were busy thinking up ways to better the experience next year, like by adding more carnival games, a DJ and possibly more food trucks, which were a big attraction.

Nonetheless, Spirit Week was a success, according to students.

With the energy emitted by the interesting outfits, high fives and giggles, the school's atmosphere created less of a reason to fear the Spartans and more of a reason to befriend them.

Mason Keebler (12) escorts Sarah Berghoff (12) before hearing Homecoming Court results.

DRESS TO IMPRESS

Monday, Sept. 23 - USA Day

Tuesday, Sept. 24 - Tourist Day

Wednesday, Sept. 25 - Twin Day

Thursday, Sept. 26 - Throwback Day

Friday, Sept. 27 - Camo Day

Worldwide update brings bigger change

Apple's recent iOS 7 excites masses, still room for small improvements to fix bugs

BY WILLIAM NGO
Executive Editor

Apple users, with one simple tap, observed their devices fall into an unconscious state of downloading later awakened to reveal the crisp, clean update known as iOS 7.

iPhones, iPads and MacBooks alike bid farewell to the familiar user interface after what seemed like a day's wait and gave customers a newer layout to gaze upon and admire.

The hyped launch generally exited the mass user population but struck an uncertain chord within Android fans.

Matt North, school technology specialist, commended Apple for its graphically enhanced project but recognized the apparent similarities between the iPhone and Android, competitive powerhouse brands.

Android is no stranger to provocative taunting when it comes to teasing the iPhone's lack of ability.

Apple's recent release, however, countered those advertisements by upgrading visuals and performance to level out the playing field.

North, an avid Droid owner, sensed Apple's definite effort to mimic certain aspects of his own phone such as widgets, a device which allows opening applications and remaining on the homepage simultaneously.

He insisted the attempt was undoubtedly intentional.

"I think that Apple is successful because they cater to a product everybody can relate to," North said. "With the new update, they made new changes to resemble Droid but not(...) (to be) unrecognizable to regular Apple users."

New iOS 7 features like the Air Drop, a device providing wireless photo, video or contact sharing, can be found in released Droid models, encouraging the idea Apple mirrored its rival.

Students, however, still remained indifferent to those claims and accepted the new update with eagerness and enthusiasm.

"I just love the change in general. I really like the new control center and iTunes radio," Casey Stanley (10) said. "I think everybody wanted some kind of change bigger than moving the headphone jack location."

Stanley has owned an iPod Touch and iPhone over the past five years and supports Apple's measure for attractiveness and easy accessibility.

There is room for the company to make even further improvements, despite the latest upgrades, according to Stanley. More personalization options and frequent updates for older products would overall improve the products for her.

Dakota Howard (11), being an Apple customer ever since the age of 9, found iOS 7 filled with positive outcomes.

He appreciated the improved photo app, allowing users to see when they took photos in chronological order.

> "I think that Apple is successful because they cater to a product everybody can relate to. With the new update, they made new changes to resemble Droid but not(...) (to be) unrecognizable to regular Apple user."
>
> **MATT NORTH**
> *Technology Specialist*

Other features such as the new calendar setup and notification system also excite Howard.

"You can block people from texting you. I think that's pretty cool," Howard said. "I plan on (using it)."

Small bugs occurred for Stanley and Howard throughout their iOS 7 usages, like app malfunctions, frozen screens and involuntary screen locks.

These issues rarely happened though, ultimately becoming minor problems compared to the entire upgrade.

The iOS 7 update brought fresh visuals and clear navigation with classic, recognizable basics to appeal the crowds as technology advances more than ever.

"If you're worried about learning a new phone, everything has the same concept and it doesn't take long to get use to it," Stanley said.

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PHOTO BY MEGAN BUTLER

PHOTOS BY WILLIAM NGO

BUMPING UP THE GAME

Students look forward to friendly competitive tournament at YMCA

By Ethan Yde
Writer

Although the fall sports season is often crowded with football, volleyball, tennis and golf, students participate in multiple intramural activities as well. This includes a volleyball program for boys, located at the YMCA.

The YMCA has provided intramural programs for high school students since it was founded in 1844. One of the more popular intramural sports at the YMCA is basketball, but that could change as soon as the word gets out about boys volleyball: a sport that is not even offered at the school.

"I decided to play intramural volleyball because it's a great sport to play with friends. My friends and I have always enjoyed playing volleyball whether it was in gym class or at a friend's house," Teddy Ray (11) said.

Because the school does not have an actual volleyball team for boys, the athletes have met elsewhere. The intramural volleyball program welcomes any high school boy in the area to gather a team of roughly six people.

The program is unique in the fact that the teams are completely independent from any adult coaches and organized practice schedules. The athletes may nominate their own team captain and decide on their own practice schedules. Practices are held wherever they choose, whether it is at the YMCA, Three Rivers Park or even an athlete's backyard.

"It is my first year in this program. I signed up with (Ray), Nick Anderson (11), Ryan Havert (11), Jake Miller (11) and Mitch Purlee (11). Our team name is Notorious D.I.G.," Tyler Strunk (11) said.

> "I joined because I'm the best male player in the school and want to bring home the gold. I'm eager to be destroying every team that tries to step on the same court as us."
>
> **TYLER STRUNK (11)**
> *Intramural Volleyball Participant*

The season starts early this month. During the first half of the season, athletes partake in friendly games once a week. The second half of the intramural volleyball program consists of tournament play in order to fairly determine which team is the best.

There is some fierce competition among the students playing; even though it is an intramural sport, the competitors do not only see volleyball as fun and games. It is each team's final goal to not simply do well in the regular season, but to be on top of the brackets once the tournament swoops in.

"I joined because I'm the best male player in the school and want to bring home the gold. I'm eager to be destroying every team that tries to step on the same court as us," Strunk said.

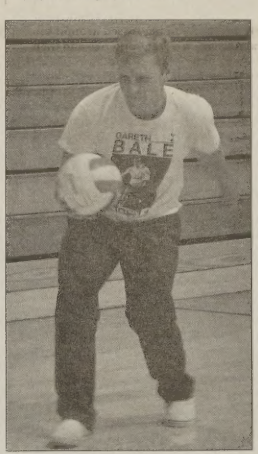
Strunk and Ray's team will be representing the junior class, while Justin Jones's (12) team will be representing the senior class. As Notorious Netters, a school tradition open to juniors and seniors, will be returning this spring, the boys are looking to get in a bit of practice with competitive volleyball.

"Our team name is Swat Team. I'm excited to watch Luke Landrigan (12) spike it in someone's face with his ups. I signed up for it because volleyball is a really fun sport to play for recreation," Jones said.

It is good to see peers participating in extracurricular activities, especially activities like intramural sports. It shows that even though there is no official boys volleyball team at school, there is still interest for a wide variety of sports. Sports, no matter which, give students time to be with their friends and enjoy competitive and friendly games.

"I'm looking forward to spending time with my friends and playing some volleyball, as well as getting good practice for Notorious Netters. Oh, and winning the tournament," Ray said.

Top: An intramural team huddles with excitement. Bottom: Nick Anderson (11) prepares to serve the ball to his fellow players during a practice meet.



Football season excites

Devoted fans follow traditions, root for favorite teams

By Adam Swiatkowski
Writer

With college and National Football League (NFL) seasons underway, passionate football fans are prepared to express their love for the game through devoted support for their team's fall games. Whether the extent of the fanatic is obsessive or casual, this sport season provides unmatched entertainment.

▶27
million people participate in the annual fantasy football

SOURCE: VISUAL.LY

"I would say I am an extremely passionate fan," Ben Skowronek (10) says. "I go to many games and this connects to why I play football."

Unlike most Indiana natives, Skowronek is an ardent fan of the Kansas City Chiefs and had been since a young age, mostly due to the fact the team has some of his family history involved.

"My uncle (Trent Green) played for the Chiefs and so I have been a fan of them for as long as I can remember," Skowronek says. "Playing like he did in the NFL would be a fun opportunity, and he inspired me to play when I was younger."

An inspiration had been developed for students to play for the school's team, having played football leisurely growing up.

"I really (admired) the player Bob Sanders," Connor Fitzharris (10) says. "I've played his position since starting flag football (as a child) and I really look up to him and how he plays."

Along with fandom comes tradition, and most devoted fans could admit to some type of game day custom.

"I usually bring out my Walter Payton jersey to support the Chicago Bears, because if I had an idol then he'd be the one," Shawn Harkness, history teacher, says. "My family knows that when watching a Bears game, it has to be silent."

College teams are also well supported across the school. On Fridays especially, college apparel can be seen throughout the halls.

"My entire family gets together to tailgate before Indiana University football games," Skowronek says. "...We can watch my brother play for the team."

Fantasy Football League is another aspect of the game which has a large following. Based on players' performance, fantasy players will receive points and compete head-to-head with friends or family.

"I am in a few right now for this football season and played last year," Fitzharris said. "I like managing a team and I enjoy going up against friends to see (who has a better team)."

Though most fans dedicate themselves to just one team, for Harkness, the matter of living in Indiana and being a Chicago fan may cause him to be torn between two sides.

"(The 2006 Super Bowl) between the Colts and the Bears was a tough one for me because living in Indiana since 1985 has made me a secondary Colts fan," Harkness explained. "(I felt) my Bears were definitely above the Colts but it was interesting because at the time, I felt a tug for (the Colts)."

Although football is only one sport in an array of fall sports, the traditions and excitement it entails creates an enthusiasm that prolongs in fans throughout the year.

Soccer player returns

Recovering senior athlete to play in California

Talented athlete Anthony Jimenez (12) prepares to return to the soccer field after a lingering hiatus. After previous injuries and altercations refrained him from playing, Jimenez is ready to continue onward with the team. Recently signing to play in college, Jimenez hopes for a successful season and future with his soccer career.

Spartana: How have your previous injuries affected the way to play?

Jimenez: I play a little more tentative and a little more cautious. Its always in the back of my head.

Spartana: How did it feel to not be able to play at the beginning of the season?

Jimenez: It didn't feel that great because I saw my team out there and whenever they would struggle i would feel bad, but it turned out to be alright.

Spartana: What inspires you to stay committed?

Jimenez: Knowing that soccer is going to take me big places

Spartana: How does the school's team differ from your Carmel travel team?

Jimenez: Homestead's team is not quite as serious and more fun. The crowds and all the fans are bigger for Homestead's team than my travel team.

Spartana: How did you start playing on the travel team?

Jimenez: The coaches down there saw me play a few times, and they basically recruited me and asked me to play.

Spartana: What college are you attending, and how did you discover it?

Jimenez: The college is Layola Marymount, and I was at a showcase in dallas this summer, and they saw me. They told me they were really interested, so that is how it all started.

Spartana: What are you looking forward to most about playing in college?

Jimenez: I get to live in California for four years and play there

Spartana: You were injured recently; what happened?

Jimenez: In the game against Carroll, I went up for a header and fell. On the way down, I tried to break my fall with my arm and hyperextended it. I got X-rays (that) morning to see if it (was) broken.

Spartana: Will this prevent you from playing?

Jimenez: It will not.

Spartana: What future do you see with soccer?

Jimenez: I see myself playing in California.

--Sydney Isroff

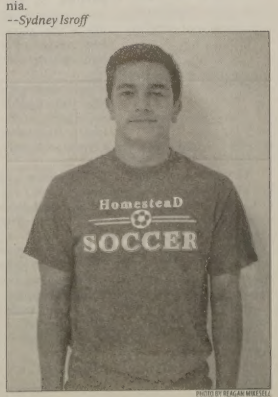


PHOTO BY REAGAN WIKESELL

Sports should tackle safety issues to avoid serious injuries

When Jim McMahon of the Chicago Bears signed his National Football League (NFL) contract at age 23, he was aware of the commitment and physical sacrifices he would need to make in order to be a successful athlete.

What the retired football star could not foresee was his diagnosis of a brain disease in his early 50s.

McMahon is living with early onset dementia, a brain disorder which alters the everyday lifestyle of its victims.

From simple memories like where the car is parked to typical chores like balancing a checkbook, dementia is a frustrating, disintegrating mental syndrome which depicts similar symptoms to Alzheimer's disease.

In retrospect, McMahon's dementia was not a fluke. It was not something which was destined to happen; the reality of the football star's fate was left in the hands of the game.

HAIDEN'S HIGHLIGHTS

BY HAIDEN STEINGASS
Sports Editor

In the 1980's, perhaps even after that, the NFL did not have the equipment, protection and medical advancements which we see today. In fact, there is solid evidence which suggests the lack of advantages the league had, ultimately spiraling into a legal disaster.

NFL gained attention for finalizing a $765 million settlement with 4,500 plus former players in a lawsuit concerning chronic health problems caused by repetitive head trauma, according to Bleacher Report.

McMahon is not alone in his struggles. There are thousands of retired players who have been diagnosed with serious brain diseases such as dementia, Lou Gehrig's disease and Alzheimer's.

As baffling and coincidental as this may sound, there is only one cause which resonates: concussions.

At school, it is not unusual to see and hear of our fellow peers being tossed around too much at football or soccer practice and then suffering the blow of a concussion.

Although these players suffer, their injuries cannot be compared with what has happened to these retired NFL athletes due to the new equipment.

The reality of the situation is every single retiree who has been diagnosed with a brain disorder was also at one time or another diagnosed with a football related concussion.

The cycle repeated time and time again, being taken in and out of games because of head injuries.

Of course, players felt the instantaneous pain coming from underneath the helmets, but no one imagined such a tragic ending to their dream careers.

Not every one of the former athletes lived to tell his story. For instance, Junior Seau of the San Diego Chargers passed away in May 2012.

He too, suffered traumatic concussions throughout the course of his career. He was a memorable man, especially on the field, but the damage harboring in his brain was nothing short of subliminal.

But this is a delicate situation; he committed suicide, and there is medical proof confirming his concussions were the cause.

In Seau's autopsy report, there was something off: an explanation for the sudden lapse in judgment.

He was found to have Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy. That is just a big word for he was hit in the head so many times, something went wrong in his brain over time.

Devastatingly enough, five other significant NFL stars followed Seau's same path of taking their own lives in just two years, and some of them were diagnosed with CTE after their deaths.

> "The reality of the situation is every single retiree who has been diagnosed with a brain disorder was also at one time or another diagnosed with a football related concussion."
>
> **HAIDEN STEINGASS**

I am not claiming to know the medical backgrounds of McMahon or Seau; I admit I had not even known what teams they played for before I stumbled upon this startling turn of events.

The men's stories need to be heard, and their legacies should withstand their overwhelming fatalities.

On a slightly more positive note, the NFL is taking these tragic circumstances and investing in preventative measures to ensure today's players do not wind up in the same condition as the ones from thirty years ago.

In line with CBS News, there is now medical professionals at the sidelines of every game to make certain the players are getting apt on-site treatment for head injuries.

This alone will save lives, along with the multi-million dollar investments the league is making in more protective and shock absorbent equipment.

Truthfully, I do not know when this adversity will run its course, but I am hoping to see the rise of a safe, enjoyable tradition of football which can stay a part of so many lives.

PHOTOS BY MEGAN BUTLER

Team beings season expecting to regain City Championship

BY AUSTEN CUMMINGS
Writer

After a month of intense practice, the hockey team had its first game against Leo High School on Saturday, Sept. 28, a big school rival.

For every season, there is always pregame training and preparation.

"I've been working out, and we have been practicing for three weeks now and doing some technique stuff at home. All you can really do is work hard and get excited," Rapoza said.

The opening night game is similar in dynamic to the rest of the season, but it is an advantageous chance to gain comfort on the ice in a pressurized setting.

> "I think it is important that we win the City Championship, because we have done that the last four years. Making it to the State Championship game would be a good highlight for my senior year."
>
> **PETER HAFFNER (12)**
> *Right Wing*

"(Opening night) feels the same because I don't see a difference between the two. However, we do get to see what the season is going to be like," Peter Haffner (12), right wing, said.

Typically, the game is viewed as an exciting, enjoyable match with less expectations than the remainder of the games.

"The first game is a lot more fun because we haven't played in four or five months. This is the first time to get back and we normally have a pretty good student section so that's a lot of fun to play with," Rapoza said.

With the incoming seniors and new additions to the varsity team, a glimpse of the upcoming season shows what the team needs to improve on for the remainder of the season.

"We really need to work on endurance and get into shape," Tyler Fix (11), right wing, said.

Despite the month of practice, the team still fell short to Leo with a score of 2-1.

"For our first game, we played well," Fix said.

Even though the athletes entered the game with a positive mindset, they were prepared and informed with Leo's talent.

"They (were) supposed to be better than last year, and they have some good players on their team... (I was not) really sure what to expect. I (did not) know how we (would) size up against them," Haffner said.

Even after a loss, the team is still looking to bring an intense competition to each of its games.

"I think we have a good team this year. Obviously we had a really good team last year, and we made it to the State Championship. We have a lot of good senior leaders," Rapoza said. "We don't look as good on paper as we did last year, but we still have the same coaches, so the team is run the same."

On a positive note, the team expects its season's performance to be fueled by the student section. In previous years, the attendance of hockey games had exponentially increased, leaving the matches with a new and exciting demeanor.

In hopes of taking advantage of the energy, the boys also want to pursue a successful postseason.

"I think it is important that we win the City Championship because we have done that the last four years. Making it to the State Championship game would be a good highlight for my senior year," Haffner said.

Top: Jay Conkling (12) squares off during a match against Leo High School. Although the team lost 2-1, it has high expectations for the rest of the season. Bottom: Jeremy Scholton (11) rushes down the rink in attempt to make a score for the school. The athletes are no stranger to representing the blue and gold at the State Tournaments and City Championships, having won the past four years.

Athletic club distributes money to sports

Booster funds withdrawn from sport fundraisers, used for new facilities, equipment

BY TESSA LUTZ
Writer

The Athletic Booster Club is a way the athletic department raises funds and support for both girls and boys sports.

The money raised by the booster club not only goes to sports teams directly but is also directed towards capital funds.

"The main misconception is that the Athletic Boosters have a say in determining where the money goes or that we choose which teams to support," Athletic Booster Club Vice President Kim Bastin said. "We do not have any say in the revenue distribution."

The money raised by the Athletic Booster Club goes straight to the athletic department, and the decision of how it is distributed falls upon the department.

"I meet with every head coach at the end of their season, and they tell me their must haves and wishes," Joe Updegrove, athletic director, said. "Based on this discussion, decisions are made on what is purchased at every level."

Contrary to common rumor, the teams who receive funding any given year are not based off the size of any team but on what the team needs to better function.

"A couple of years ago we got new uniforms, and it's always nice to get new things, but our team is small enough that we obviously don't need a lot of funding compared to the other teams," Vanessa Berghoff (12), gymnast, said.

The Athletic Booster Club is the only sanctioned fundraising organization for the varsity athletics, and in March of this year, it made the largest singular donation.

"We were very excited to make a $100,000 donation to the new Jimmy Clark Tennis Facility," Bastin said.

The two basic ways funds are raised are through the club's General Membership and Program book which is produced three times a year.

Other funds, approximately $45-$50,000 annually, come from spirit wear and various fundraisers throughout the school year.

"(The program book) is professionally produced and is one of the finest program books in the state. We sell ads to local businesses and professionals while the revenue varies annually, we raise approximately $20-$25,000 from the program book," Bastin said.

> **▶46**
> sports teams are offically approved by the IHSAA for student athletes

Seasonal fundraisers rely directly on the participation of athletes. Fall athletes raise money by selling gold cards, which are discount cards to various businesses in the area.

The Booster Club started the program of selling cards but now only assists in the process. Now, the fundraising had been taken over by the sports teams and the athletic department.

The spring and winter athletes sell Coventry Car Wash cards, which raise roughly $75,000.

The proceeds from these cards go straight to the athletic department and no longer go through Athletic Boosters.

Dance Marathon is also another athletic fundraiser which had taken place for over 30 years and had raised anywhere from $20-$40,000.

Information on the how to join the Athletic Booster Club or buy ad space is on page 6 of the fall program book.

Despite the common mistaken belief, the distribution of Athletic Boosters money varies and cannot be categorized in a certain configuration.

OUTSIDE THE LINES

By Allie Nelson
Executive Editor

With only the stark, white canvas between themselves and their creative potential, student artists are bounded only by edges while illustrating a story, thought or image. No matter what dimension or platform through which they produce, imaginative thinkers are united by one thing: their love for expression.

SARA HUDNALL (12)

ARTWORK BY SARA HUDNALL

Rather than seeking an artistic outlet only to nurture her talent and inclination, art club senior representative Sara Hudnall (12) experienced a different calling to art; Hudnall desired explaining truth.

"I've always liked drawing eyes so that kind of sparked my interest to go into art," Hudnall said. "You can't hide anything with your eyes...they're windows to the soul so they're always going to tell the truth about someone. So if I'm looking at something and see something that doesn't really look right, if you (sic) add eyes to it, it's more true."

Although Hudnall's entrance intro drawing was prompted solely by her interest in eyes, her experience in several other fields of art have promoted her growth. Not only is she a leader of art club, which experiments with every kind of art, but she has completed most of the art classes offered.

"It was good to get more feedback and get to work on things to make them look more realistic," Hudnall said. "I do a lot of portraits and landscapes (...) and I do baskets in fiber arts."

Hudnall's future, despite her skill with art, is uncertain. Her current plans to study psychology overshadow the possibilities of focusing solely on art. Her talent provides a release - a break from reality and an escape from everyday pressures.

"I'll probably still do art just on the side," Hudnall said. "It's a stress reliever for me. I don't plan on pursuing it, but it's just a good way to unwind and let go."

JAMES LUPKIN (12)

ARTWORK BY JAMES LUPKIN

To the average person it may be simply a building. It may be a historic, old-looking or deserted structure. It may be well known, or maybe not. Whether it is the Coliseum or an unimportant, weathered construction, to James Lupkin (12) it is a muse.

The independent study student , attracted to drawing since his interest in comics in sixth grade, fosters his interest by taking a different route. Presently, Lupkin concentrates primarily on realistic drawings of people and architecture.

"(I draw people) because it requires more skill than some of the other art fields," Lupkin said. "It is more challenging. (People are) all I drew for the longest time and I never had been good at (architecture) and we did it in art class and I caught on really well to it."

Lupkin, currently occupied with a self-portrait inspired by a depiction of Saint Sebastian, surpassed new limits, as he had never done a piece on that large of a scale nor of himself.

"(My inspirations are) the old masters and definitely my brother," Lupkin said. "He's a lot better at it than I am and he's a lot better at telling a story with it than I am so I am always trying to strive to be at his level."

Having completed all art classes pertaining to his field, traveled to Italy for a three-week visit this past summer and begun projects new to his realm of expertise, experiences other than sketching guided his life and changed him personally.

"I definitely recommend traveling to other artists and trying to draw what you see," Lupkin said. "I think (art has) allowed me to open up my eyes and see things a lot differently than most people see them."

DAKOTA BURKS (10)

ARTWORK BY DAKOTA BURKS

Strolling through a charming, serene landscape of France is nothing to be overlooked by anyone. Not all young illustrators were able to visit such a quaint, foreign setting with picturesque surroundings as Dakota Burks (10) was. However, something about the venue distinguished it from every other site.

Not only is the location the former backyard of painter Claude Monet but it is also the backdrop of some of his most celebrated works of art.

"It (was) breathtaking. It's like walking through the paintings, being in the lily gardens knowing about all the paintings from that," Burks said "It was just really humbling to be standing in the place where he woke up every morning and stand in the place where he did all his paintings."

Burks' exceptional experience, however, was not what initially transformed her into an aspiring creator.

"I grew up in a household where art was a big part of it," Burks said. "When I was younger I'd sort of always be drawing pictures everywhere in her art room and I'd watch her paint and watch her do all of her stuff. I got really involved in different aspects of (art) from a young age."

Burks has no single appreciation, because she had been exposed to her mother's inclination toward the realistic approaches. She, like most other artists, however, is influenced by a favorite.

"I really like drawing people," Burks said. "I like the way the body sort of moves. I find it really interesting so some of my favorite drawings have been of my friends or my family or myself."

Burks, connected to all types of art in some form, knows the method of expression will continue to impact her life as it always had.

"This world is but a canvas to our imagination."

-Henry David Thoreau

the SPARTANA

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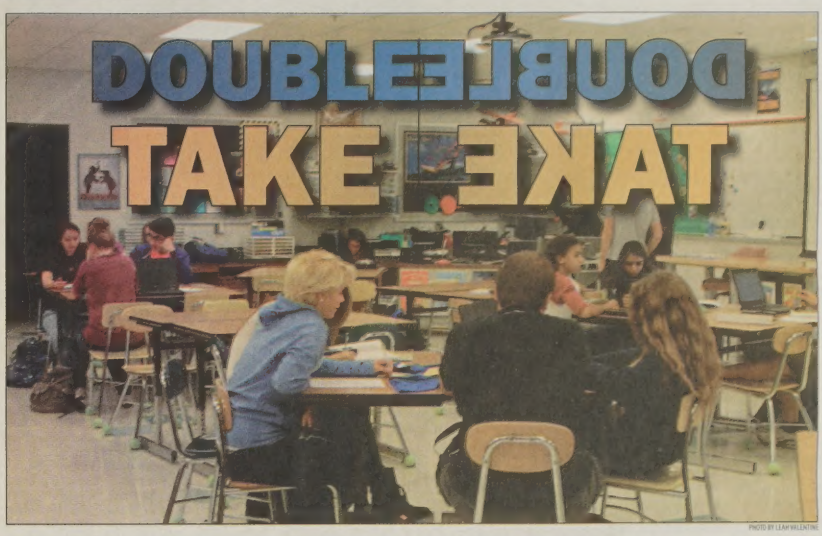

PHOTO BY LEAH VALENTINE

Students collaborate in Physics 220, one of the most popular dual credit classes offered. Students who participate in this particular class receive credit through IPFW.

Popularity of dual credit classes sparks further implementation

BY KATIE DUNLAP
News Editor

The opportunities for students to participate in dual credit courses, classes that can earn students both high school and college credit, will continue to expand with a wider variety of courses offered.

"The students in a dual credit course, as long as they make an acceptable grade, get the Homestead credit on their transcript, but they also get college credit hours on their transcript. Depending on the course, it could be as many as six hours for sitting in a class here," Susan Summers, assistant principal, said.

Dual credit classes already offered include English, or W131, three science classes including physics, several business classes and most recently, AP Psychology. As the number of students opting to take these courses rise, new class options arise.

"We're in the process of getting four art classes (...) approved for next year," Summers said. "We are looking to make government dual credit, because almost any major you pick you'll have to get some social studies. We're also looking to make speech a dual credit course, because that's another thing that almost every student needs (in college)."

Students that take part in these classes incur many benefits, from cost to accessibility. The credits received from the courses transfer to any state university and some private universities in Indiana.

"(Dual credit courses) are convenient. Students don't need to get in their cars and drive over to IPFW or Saint Francis. A big contributor to the rise in popularity is that it is cheap to take a dual credit course," Sarah Imbody, W131 English teacher, said.

Because these are college classes, the difficulty level is raised to a higher level than an average class. Qualifications must be met to take these classes, depending on the college offering the course. IPFW requires that students have at least a B average, while Ivy Tech looks at students' PSAT scores.

"The rigor is definitely much higher for a college level course. Even though we're here on site, the attitude is that this is a college course and the expectations are the same as they will be when you're on campus next year," Imbody said. "You are doing more work, you're getting a more varied experience and I think that the tasks a lot of times align more with what they'll be experiencing next year."

Taking dual credit courses also saves money for students as they enter college.

▶ SEE 'DUAL CREDIT,' PAGE 2

MAKING THE GRADE

Students who wish to take a dual credit course must meet specific qualifications in order to do so. For courses offered through IPFW, students must have at least a B average. Ivy Tech, however, takes into consideration students' PSAT scores for dual credit. Scoring well on the PSAT can guarantee students a spot in a dual credit course. Current dual credit classes include but are not limited to the following:

Course	Teacher
Physics 220	Matt Elder
W131	Sarah Imbody
AP Psychology	Tim Decker
Future Teachers	Tiffany Ham
Adv. Theatre Arts	Victoria Malooley

PHOTO BY LEAH VALENTINE

Sectors of youth program merge

BY IAN MCKENZIE
Copy Editor

The sum is greater than the parts; at least, that's the hope behind the Youth for Christ organization's recent decision to merge two of its more potent chapters: the Fort Wayne Area Youth for Christ chapter, responsible for Allen, Huntington, Whitley and Wabash counties, and the Northeastern Indiana Youth for Christ chapter, responsible for DeKalb, LaGrange, Noble and Steuben counties.

At first glance, the effect on the school's Campus Life program is tangential, not really affecting it in any immediate way simply because of the segmented nature of the program.

"Homestead Campus Life is not going to see any direct changes as a result of the merger," Brian Biedenbach, director of Homestead Campus Life, said.

> "There will be opportunities for us to interact with students from other schools from outside of the Fort Wayne area chapter."
>
> **BRIAN BIEDENBACH**
> *Director of Campus Life*

That said, there will be potential avenues of interaction available that will be opened with the merging, possibly linking the 10,000 teens in the region already reached via school Campus Life programs, mentoring programs in the Juvenile Justice system and educational and recreational programs offered in Auburn and at the Primetime Center in downtown Fort Wayne, according to the Fort Wayne Area Youth for Christ website, even further.

"There will be opportunities for us to interact with students from other schools from outside of the Fort Wayne Area chapter," Biedenbach said. "So, the (newly joined) schools to the north of us,

▶ SEE 'CAMPUS LIFE,' PAGE 2

BRIEFS

PARENT CLUB PRACTICE EXAMS
The Parent Club is putting on a practice SAT/ACT exam Nov. 9. Deadline to register is Oct. 25. Any student or parent who desires more information can check the school website for details.

SAT/ACT CLASSES
Classes are being offered to students who plan to take the SAT or ACT. Classes are offered for both the math and verbal portions of the test. Both sessions run from 5:30-8 and meet one day a week. There are a total of five sessions. The cost is $90 for one session, or $170 for both. For more information, contact student services.

VISITING COLLEGES
Colleges will be sending admissions representatives to visit with prospective students in upcoming days. Students need to register in student services and pick up a college visitation pass at least one day prior to the visit they wish to attend a meeting. Today, Oct. 17, an admissions representative from University of Alabama, University of Evansville and Xavier University will be holding meetings throughout the day in order to meet with interested students.

CORRECTION
In the previous issue distributed Oct. 4, a design error caused a misleading fact regarding National Merit Semifinalists to be printed. As originally and properly stated by Amy Hamilton, guidance counselor, the Selection Index Qualifying Score for Indiana National Merit Scholars was 215 out of 240.

Unregistered vehicles become a problem

Student drivers disregard school car registration policy, difficulties arise

BY MALLORY MCCAULLEY
Writer

Although car registration has been regularly enforced throughout the years, recent events have brought to light the fact that students may not have their car registered properly.

Students involved in car accidents on school property are facing additional complications if one of the cars involved is either unregistered or the registration insufficient. Sydney Yergler (11) faced such complications when her car was scraped in the parking lot.

"I was not in my car at the time. My friend was pulling into the parking spot next to (my car), and she scraped the side of my car with her front bumper," Yergler said.

Certain procedures must follow events such as these to so all necessary information can be obtained and shared with students.

"I had no idea what was going on, (...) and they told me she scraped my car. (I didn't have my car registered), I never updated it," Yergler said.

To get a car registered, a car registration form and random drug test form complete with a parent signature must be turned

▶ SEE 'REGISTRATION,' PAGE 2

PHOTO BY MEGAN BUTLER

Student cars, both registered and unregistered, park in the school parking lot throughout the school day. Student drivers of vehicles that are unregistered will first receive a warning, followed by a loss of school parking privileges. The lot will continually be searched for violators.

FCCLA kicks off canned food drive

Club promotes community activism through first period can competition

BY MEGAN CATER
Copy Editor

Family Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) is hosting a canned food drive from Oct. 1-Nov. 1.

Students should bring in any canned food items they have to their first period class throughout the month of October. The canned food items will be taken to the Community Harvest Food Bank.

"We want good food (...) we don't want the cans that no one eats in your house that have been in the back of the shelf. We want food that people find enjoyable and that isn't expired," Izzy Farmer (12), FCCLA President, said.

The winning class will be determined based on the percent of cans collected. Therefore, large classes have no advantage over smaller classes.

"First period teachers are going to collect (the cans) in their room and the FCCLA members will go around to the rooms Nov. 1 and collect the cans," Christie Shelby, family and consumer science teacher, said. "We're going to (determine the winner) based off a percentage. For example, we'll do it for subjects such as English, study hall, math etcetera, and then take a percentage of that."

About halfway through October, FCCLA members will do a midway count to see who, based on percentage, is in the lead so far.

The goal for FCCLA is to gather 2,013 canned food items, correlating with the year 2013. To encourage participation, the first period class with the most cans, based on their percentage, will

▶ SEE 'FOOD DRIVE,' PAGE 2

> "I think it's good that there is a club that's going out and doing charity work where it is needed in Fort Wayne."
>
> **KARLI MEYERS (12)**

▶CAMPUS LIFE CONTINUED FROM 1

(comprising) about four different counties, will be able to interact with (us) for large events and other just combined, collaborative efforts."

Originally, though, the decision was primarily practical, solving an issue of succession in the Northeastern chapter.

"Part of (the decision to merge) was that the Northeast Indiana chapter guy retired, and they were working on a succession plan that didn't work, and so one of their board guys said, 'maybe we ought to just talk to the Fort Wayne guys since we are so close,'" Larry Lance, executive director of the Fort Wayne Youth for Christ chapter, said.

Another fortunate byproduct of the merging, though, touched on by a statement recently released by Fort Wayne Area Youth for Christ, is that the execution of this plan could potentially amount to savings in excess of $100,000, money Lance believes can be used for the organization's central endeavor to consistently strive to develop safe, bridge-building relationships with middle school and high school students through the different programs that they have to offer, also stated on the organization's website.

"We (would prevent) duplications in hiring people and office people and resources, and we probably (will) save a lot of money," Lance said. "Now we'll be able to expand into more schools faster because of the funding that's going to be saved by not having to duplicate the infrastructure."

Some of those aforementioned large, combined events, those that will be useful springboards from which a fruitful relationship between the two organizations can be launched, have already been pegged out in the near future.

"Every year, everyone (from the Fort Wayne Area Youth for Christ chapter) goes down to Laguna Beach for a retreat" Jared Warner (12) said. "Also, we do the Go Mad event in early November, which is basically a huge (retreat) for a weekend that takes place at the Grand Wayne Center."

PHOTO BY MEGAN BUTLER

Students huddle together before a dodgeball game on Oct. 14 at a Campus Life meeting. The Southwest Campus Life will be included in the Youth for Christ merge.

HOMESTEAD DEBUNKED

Myth: The beginning and ending times of the elementary schools will switch with those of the high schools.

Status: False - The start and ending times will stay the same, for the time being, in the district.

"The idea has been brought up but there has been no talk or discussion on the elementary and high schools time changing," Dr. Steven Yager, superintendent, said.

There has been speculation that the elementary and high school times will take a different turn and swap the time school begins and ends. School bells will still ring at 7:45 a.m. for Homestead students, and there has not been talk about the start time changing any time soon.

The idea was originally brought up after complaints about the start time being too early for high school students, who are prone to staying up later at night than elementary students. However, there are no plans to change.

Students and teachers have different opinions on the issue. Some would like to see the time change because they will get more time to sleep; others would rather not make changes. The idea of changing the time schedule may get brought up again in the future, but at this time there are not enough reasons to switch the times. Students will still get out of school at 2:35 P.M. instead of ending the school day at 3:30 P.M. like the elementary schools.

To make such a drastic change in the schedule would be a stark difference from previous years as the middle schools and high school have always begun earlier than the younger children at the elementary schools.

The administration has not begun any planning and do not see this time swap occurring in the near future. For now, students will be heading to school with the same time schedule.

--Janay Alberts

Students 'support' troops

Big Thank You Project promotes student encouragement

BY APARNA CHINTAPALLI
Writer

Campaigning for the support for American troops, the Big Thank You Project has been a prevalent source of encouragement for men and women deployed outside the United States. Students can get involved by writing a letter as well.

The Big Thank You Project was initiated by members of The Bert Show, a morning radio program whose goal was to get listeners to show support for the U.S. troops by writing letters to express a "big thank you." This project has encouraged numerous people throughout the nation to show their gratitude for the American troops through the simple measure of writing a letter.

> "The amount of time it takes to write a letter of gratitude is not much, yet the amount of appreciation it garners is huge."
>
> **AMANDA PATTERSON**
> *English teacher*

Since 2007, the Big Thank You Project has successfully sent thousands of letters to troops around the world. In 2011, 650,000 letters were sent, which far surpassed their initial goal. Though the letters being sent continue to multiply, the goal of the project persists: to provide a letter of appreciation to each service member outside the United States by Thanksgiving Day.

Many soldiers have responded to the letters, acknowledging the heartfelt content, humor and emotion of the letters received. The Big Thank You Project has become a widespread campaign, catching the attention of both First Lady Michelle Obama and President Bill Clinton. The Bert Show was given a chance to speak to Michelle Obama directly; she expressed her appreciation of the project and her personal experiences of meeting with soldiers serving the country.

Led by a long line of participation and support, the Big Thank You Project continues to play an integral role in consolidating the American troops. Students may have the opportunity to get involved in the upcoming weeks in their advisory classes. If students choose to write a letter in their free time, they can be mailed in to the Oasis Radio Group or dropped off at Jersey Mikes, a sponsor of the program. Also, The Bert Show asks for volunteers to help with the letters.

"The Big Thank You project definitely is something I believe in," Drake White (11) said. "It's just a small something for those service members overseas to let them know we still care and thank them for all the work they've put in for our protection. It's something we can do in advisory and brightens a person's day that much more and that's what counts."

In order to support this project, people among the nation are encouraged to start a letter writing campaign.

"I think the Big Thank You Project is a wonderful idea," Christina Jesse (11) said. "It's nice to be able to sit down and write out how thankful we are, and I imagine a letter would brighten anyone's day."

Anyone, including students, can get involved with this project. Whether it be a part of school, church, civic group or neighborhood, the small gesture of writing a letter can go a long way. In this era of progressing technology, the Big Thank You Project defies the social norms in which people communicate. It represents a perpetual measure of giving.

"I thought this project would be something great for the students of Homestead to participate in," Amanda Patterson, English teacher said. "The amount of time it takes to write a letter of gratitude is not much, yet the amount of appreciation it garners is huge. Everyone can participate in this, and I hope they do. Homestead has over 2000 students; we can easily write at least that many letters!"

The guidelines for participating in the Big Thank You Project are simple. Each letter should be heartfelt, handwritten, original and free of any political statements. Essentially, the letter should express gratitude and contribute to the nature of the holiday season; also, donations are not permitted. The deadline to send in letters is November 1, 2013. More information on sending letters can be found on the Bert Show website.

"I think the project is a great event and everyone should participate if they get the opportunity," Jeremy Tatara (11) said. "Even in the chaos of the government right now, it reminds us that we are in a country that is under the protection of our own people and, therefore, we should be very grateful."

▶DUAL CREDIT CONTINUED FROM 1

"You can save a semester or year of money. The courses you're taking from Ivy Tech for example are free, while they could cost $600 to $1,000 to take once students leave Homestead's doors," Summers said. "If you could get your college degree in three years instead of four (...) that could be a saving of $16,000, $20,000, even $30,000, depending (upon) where you go. We're trying to realize how expensive college is for your generation and how many students end up in such horrible debt because of college."

The enrollment rates in dual credit courses are increasing sharply.

"The W131 classes are capped at 22 students per section. The first semester I taught it, I had two sections. In the spring I had three, and this year I have six. Word is getting out," Imbody said.

These classes require more than a typical high school class, but similar to AP classes, have attracted students that are looking to begin college courses while in high school.

"(Dual credit classes) are popular because you save money, and in general, they are easier than a normal college class. They give you a head start on your college career," Madison Moore (11) said.

Lots of the students already involved in these classes enjoy the numerous benefits they provide and plan to continue taking more dual credit courses.

"I think I will probably take more dual credit classes next year because it helps save money later on," Moore said.

Dual credit courses provide students an opportunity to begin their college career earlier for less money. Because of the popularity of such classes, students will have access to a wider selection of courses in the 2014-15 school year.

"The main goal (we have) when we're looking at which classes to bring is we would love for students to graduate with at least their first year of general studies done, or potentially, especially in the area of business, to be almost halfway done with an associate's degree. We recognize what a benefit it is to our students, who are more than capable to handle the entry college courses," Summers said.

▶Why?

Courses which offer dual credit curriculum allow students to receive college credit through a college level class at a cost lower than if the class were to be taken at a university. This can lead to the prospect of an earlier college graduation date and significant monetary savings.

▶REGISTRATION CONTINUED FROM 1

When getting a parking pass, students should have their car registration readily available to bring with them.

Although having unregistered cars can pose an issue in the situation of an accident, students are not commonly caught parking without registration.

"(Cars not being registered) is not a big problem at this point," Ann Matheis, attendance officer, said.

However, unregistered cars may become more of an issue as not all students making use of the parking lot are getting their car registered.

One speculated motivation behind leaving cars unregistered is a lack of effort on the part of students to do so.

"(Students don't register their cars) because they're too lazy to go to the treasurer's to register (their car)," Alex Mackenzie (11) said.

Students must pay a fee of $35 to get a school parking pass. This fee covers the costs for one full school year.

However, if a student were to get his or her license over winter break, they would only have to pay a discounted rate.

Certain consequences follow the disregarding of the vehicle registration rule. On the first offense, the student will only be given a warning.

However, if there were to be an incident a second time, the student could either lose driving privileges and/or have his or her car towed. These consequences can be found in the student handbook.

Despite the presumed hassle of the registration process, In many instances, it can be to the students advantage to have their cars registered.

If a student leaves his or her car lights on, for example, the owner of the car could easily be looked up in order to resolve the problem.

"(Students) should have to (get their cars registered) so the cars can be identified in case lights are left on," Mackenzie said.

Because of the large amount of unregistered cars still parking in the parking lot, Officer Herriot has been patrolling the parking lot more frequently in attempt to catch those breaking the vehicle registration rule.

"Yes (Officer Herriot has been more attentive on checking if cars are registered), Matheis said. "A lot of it has to do with our student resource officer's availability."

▶FOOD DRIVE CONTINUED FROM 1

receive a home-cooked breakfast.

"The class that gets the highest percentage per class will get a breakfast. We're going to have my first period nutrition and wellness class prepare breakfast for the winners," Shelby said.

However, this will not be the basic banana and orange juice "breakfast", but rather a full meal.

"Miss Hagan, Miss Shelby and Ms. Ham are going to be in charge of the meal, so it's obviously going to be good food," Farmer said.

Along with the canned food drive, FCCLA has already begun to participate and plan for other events.

"I think it's good that there is a club that's going out and doing charity work where it is needed in Fort Wayne. Key Club is a great club too, but FCCLA is getting involved in the community and getting the school involved, too. I also think it's cool how they are including food in the different projects they are doing," Karli Meyers (12) said.

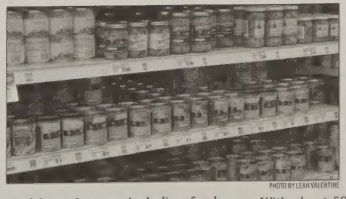

PHOTO BY LEAH VALENTINE

Cans such as those pictured to the left will be collected in first period every morning in order to support the FCCLA's canned food drive. All food collected will be donated to the needy.

FCCLA has planned to incorporate the food aspect of Hospitality Club combined with a community service goal. Already this year they have made dog biscuits to take in to the humane society.

"We're doing activities, we're doing community service; we're trying to get people interested in topics of the things we teach like nutrition and wellness, interior design, fashion, etcetera," Shelby said.

With about 50 students at the first meeting, FCCLA has become quite popular. Students who are interested in food, community service and other family and consumer science subjects are still welcome to join FCCLA. Meetings are held every other Thursday in Tiffany Ham's room 100.

"This is our first big thing that we're trying to head off," Shelby said. "There are a lot of families out there who can't feed their children and this is to get the idea across that there is something we can do as a school to help that."

the SPARTANA STAFF & EDITORIAL POLICY 2013-2014

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OPINION

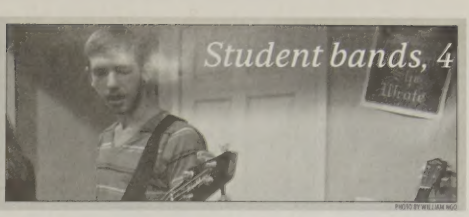

PHOTO BY WILLIAM NGO

Limited hall passes unfairly restrict student right to leave during class period

By Kylie Poling
Opinion Editor

As a student, I am constantly on-the-go. My classes are spread all across the building, meaning that I have to spend the full six minutes of each passing period racing through the crowded halls so as to avoid tardies. Because of this, I do not have time to use the restroom. And also due to this, I have to sign passes during class. I have 42 passes allotted to me per year, so I have no qualms with this time constraint. It is a nuisance, but manageable.

I draw the line, though, when teachers begin to limit how often I am allowed to sign a pass, infringing upon my rights as a student, and more importantly, as a human being.

To exemplify this, I am only allotted two passes per semester in my fifth period class. That means that for two quarters, 18 weeks, 90 days, I am only allowed to use the bathroom twice during that hour and 30 minutes period. It is undeniably ludicrous. I do not have a medical problem that requires me to use the restroom at an uncommon frequency. Rather, I am a human being that has a bladder.

There is no rule in the handbook that states students are limited to so many passes per quarter or semester. This omission means that when constraints are placed upon signing passes, it is at the predilection of the teacher–not the administration, not the school board, not the principal.

Teachers should not be allowed to limit when I am allowed to use the bathroom. The 10-10 rule has already been put in place to further limit my restroom usage, and it is not fair to me, nor anyone for that matter, that these restrictions are put in place by some teachers.

> "This is a matter of fairness. It is not up for debate. Teachers should not be allowed to restrict how often students are allowed to sign passes."
>
> **KYLIE POLING**

"I think it's senseless and unfair, and I don't think teachers would want to clean up my mess if I went on the floor," Krista Farrell (10) said.

Thankfully, not all teachers limit how many passes students can sign during their respective classes. This can serve as a relief to students after a long 47 minute period of agony.

"Signing a pass is sometimes the only way I can use the restroom during the day," Farrell said.

Despite this, it is understandable to assume the worst of students. They may sign a pass to go to the bathroom under the guise of undergoing bodily functions, but may, in fact, be cheating or acting as a general disruption to class time. Situations such as those should be dealt with on an individual basis, however. Why punish the many for the crimes of the few? It simply is not fair to those that do not abuse their restroom time, and restrictions should never have been enacted on a large scale in the first place.

Some faculty members may argue that they are not allowed to use the restroom during class either and have to wait for the passing period. The fact of the matter is, though, that students have to navigate to their next class and, while teachers may have time to use the restroom during this time, students do not. "We don't' have as much time to go the bathroom because our classes are so spread out," Farrell said. "I have class in the regular building and then I have class in the Freshman Academy, so I rely on signing passes to go (to the bathroom)."

This is a matter of fairness. It is not up for debate. Teachers should not be allowed to restrict how often students are allowed to sign passes. Students' schedules are cramped enough already. No one needs the added stress of having to find non-existent time during passing periods to use the restroom because there are restrictions to do so during class.

Gym credit not needed for athletes

The current precedence of a required gym class has long been established in the majority of public high schools across the nation. The purpose behind gym class is, and always has been, to educate students on the various rules, regulations and customs that go along with various sports, as well as to test them on their physical ability. These goals, however, are only useful if students are not receiving that education elsewhere. For most student athletes, the education received in gym class is paralleled, if not surpassed, by the knowledge received from their involvement in sports and is therefore unnecessary for athletes.

Gym class, while helpful in aiding the promotion of health, athleticism and wellness, wastes valuable time and resources for athletes who have already surpassed the level of physical education that is offered in gym class. With the plethora of advanced placement courses that are available to students, it seems counterproductive to force students into a gym class instead of opening up schedule space in order to make such academic classes more accessible. Beyond high level academic courses, students who are already skilled in athletics could use the available room in their schedule to take more fine arts or foreign language classes, challenging themselves in areas that they are not already excelling in.

In addition to opening options to athletes, omitting the requirement of gym class would create a positive influx in extracurricular sports involvement. By adding the incentive of terminating both physical education requirements, more students would be inclined to participate in sports. This expansion would further elevate the school's athletic teams while encouraging students to branch out into athletics. In doing so, physical education could be taught through a means more receptive to students and more conducive an overall healthy lifestyle.

The rigor of extracurricular athletics far surpasses that of gym class; the swim team spends nearly four hours per day practicing, the cross country team runs mile after mile six days a week and football players attend intense, physically demanding conditioning sessions even throughout their off season. It seems almost comical to imagine a need to test their knowledge of sports or their athleticism. If cross country runners can run three miles at a 6:50 mile pace, then why should they have to be graded on whether or not they can efficiently run a mile in gym class?

The Ed Board

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CARTOON BY EMILY SMITH

Although the option of gym class should be extended towards student athletes, physical education should not be required.

For those students who do not participate in school sanctioned sports, however, physical education is still a very relevant course. The idea is for students to extend their talents and abilities across multiple platforms; if a student is proficient at art yet doesn't know soccer from baseball, then they should work on their knowledge of physical wellness. The same goes for talented athletes who are weak in the arts. Just like students can test into higher math classes or take courses through other educational mediums, athletes should be accredited for the work they put in and the education they receive from extracurricular sports.

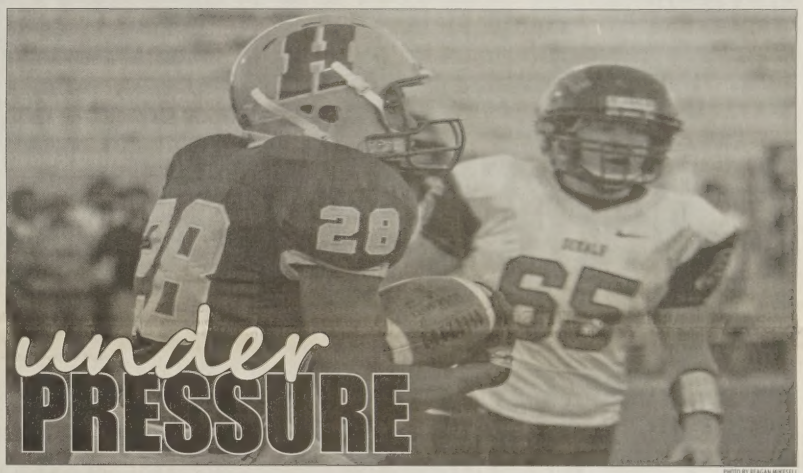


PHOTO BY REAGAN MIKESELL

Attending daily practices and weekend games, football players have limited time to themselves, much less remain updated on their schoolwork.

Responsibilities athletes face prove to benefit students academically

By Katie Maher
Writer

Whether it be baseball, dancing, swimming or tennis, a sport as an extracurricular activity is an assiduous commitment, the dedication to which only intensifies from elementary to high school. As the difficulty in sport and school rises, it is understandable that some may question if the combination is too much pressure for a student. But the added pressure can be positive and teach life lessons, as long as an athlete balances school and athletics correctly.

It is no question that being a student-athlete is a lot of hard work. Students have to be prepared each day with completed homework assignments, tests and quizzes, as well as practices or a big game in addition to academic requirements. Even with a tight schedule, motivated students are most likely to not fall behind academically. The time press every night after practice can actually serve as a beneficial factor because motivated student athletes must finish their studying during those shortened hours before the game or bed.

In most schools, students that are behind academically cannot even participate in school sports. This serves as a motivational factor to complete schoolwork. When schools enforce rules like that on sports teams, students know that they need to prioritize school first, before practice. The athletes will find that ranking their schoolwork first after practice will take a heavy amount of pressure off, and being able manage both sport and academic life will be a great life skill for the future.

Something that can escalate pressure when taking on an academics-sports combination is when a student finds that he or she has less time for themselves, and less time with friends. Again, this is another issue of balancing a schedule, for participating in time-consuming activities includes some sacrifices. But for some, this is not even an issue. Several athletes actually see practices and games as "me time", and teammates that they play with and socialize with everyday are actually some of their closest friends.

Some people can handle more stress than others. If a student finds they have a special talent or interest in an activity, it can actually be a great way to relieve pressure opposed to amounting stress. Even if he or she is not planning on playing at the collegiate level or professionally, participating in a sport is a way to stay fit and to help take the mind off of anything stressful that is going on in daily life.

Participating in a school sport also looks great on a college application. Sports are associated with hard-work, determination, and leadership; all qualities that colleges look for in potential students. No matter what, a student-athlete will feel some more pressure than someone who does not participate in any activities, and there is no way to get around it. The addition of sports in a daily routine teaches discipline, and learning to handle the extra load of stress actually can help later on in life when life can be even more over hectic.

So if one if worried about participating in a school sport while trying to maintain good grades, it would actually be best to stick with the activity for all of the benefits. It all comes down to meeting equilibrium, some pressure can still be present--but not too much to overwhelm one to quit playing sports altogether.

twitter take

The Spartana will attempt to capture the most impulsive responses on Twitter.

@TheSpartana

Question: "If you were the government, what would you shut down?"

@Karlyhorse - Karly Bailey (12) ▶ "Carroll #WhoAreTheTranquills."

@karateCHOPPER - Christian Hopper (12) ▶ "Miley Cyrus."

@ABSamatteroffact - Abbey Kittaka (12) ▶ "Miley Cyrus haters."

@iGrindCoffee - Evan Coffee (12) ▶ "Puppy Mills."

@getWHITme - Whitney Carroll (12) ▶ "My body. I need a day off."

Obamacare misunderstood by public

By Colby Shoup
Writer

Obamacare, officially referred to as the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010, has arguably been the most controversial bill passed in recent American history. This bill is one of the few topics everyone in this nation has a strong opinion about, but is it really right for any of them to have such strong opinions about a complicated bill that they know very little about?

Both Democrats and Republicans have spread so many lies about what the bill means to America and what exactly it states would probably be a surprise to most people. Until the politicians who are supposed to be experts on this bill actually start talking as if they have read and understand this extremely complex bill, they do not have the right to argue for or against it.

As much as I hate to admit this, being a Democrat myself, the biggest lie about the bill has come from the Democrats that are supposed to be supporting it. Many Democrats have implied that Obamacare makes health care free for everyone in this country, but this could not be farther from the truth. In fact, Obamacare actually forces Americans to buy health care, whether they like it or not. It does make health care free for a minority of low income individuals who make too much money to qualify for the benefits of Medicaid, a government service that helps those in poverty pay for health care.

Some of the ways Obamacare will change the healthcare business for the better include taxing small businesses that refuse to buy healthcare for their employees and restricting some insurance companies' abilities to refuse buyers by enacting high prices. Aspects of the bill like these are a gigantic deal and will encourage the healthcare business to be less about making money and more about helping as many people as possible. Effects like these would get the public extremely excited for the bill to come into effect in 2014, so it makes even less sense that the Democrats are resorting to lies to try to sell the bill to the people.

Infamous for twisting facts to work to their advantage, the Republican party has told quite a few lies when debating Obamacare policies. The most ridiculous of these lies came from Sarah Palin, who said back in 2009 that Obamacare put in place a panel of doctors that would decide what health issues were important enough to treat and which people and conditions would be given no health care and "left to die".

Another Republican-founded claim was that Obamacare gives the president the right to his own private army. What this section of the bill truly says is that Obama has the right to establish a "ready reserve Corps," which is a group of medical professionals for the military. This is either proof that politicians can neither read nor comprehend the bills they were paid to read, or that the Republican party is once again distorting information to try to sway the public opinion to their side in the most unethical way possible. Personally, my vote is for the latter.

Both parties are guilty of distorting facts and not understanding the bill, so until they understand everything in it and can argue about it without misinterpreting information, I think both sides are on the wrong because they are not doing their jobs as elected officials.

▶59

percent of Americans are in support of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

SOURCE: WASHINGTONPOST.COM

PHOTO BY MEGAN BUTLER

Breast cancer awareness support increases

Students participate in walks, fundraisers in effort to diminish number of lives affected by disease

BY SARAH CAMINO
Writer

October not only heralds the debut of crudely carved Jack-o'-lanterns and nighttime trick-or-treating; it also marks the month when customary autumnal pigments are offset with bright pink, a color synonymous with breast cancer awareness.

National breast cancer awareness month endeavors to increase cognizance of breast cancer prevention, raise funds to aid research projects and offer community support for those affected by breast cancer.

"(My family has) done the (Making Strides Against Breast Cancer) walk every year since eighth grade," Mercedes Yanez (12) said. "We tried to get involved by doing what we could."

Yanez first decided to participate during her eighth grade year soon after her mother was diagnosed with breast cancer.

"I think it's important (to participate) because I know that my mom wouldn't want to be remembered as someone who was sick," Yanez said. "It's important for every cancer patient to be remembered in a happy way."

Julie Bennett, special education teacher, can be seen sporting a pink ribbon brooch during October, and has participated in fundraising walks for cancer awareness and prevention. However, for Bennett, breast cancer awareness includes educating the community that breast cancer can also affect men.

"I had a friend who recently passed away, and he had breast cancer," Bennett said. "I think it's really important to get (the fact that men are susceptible to breast cancer) out there. Accurate information is so, so important."

Bennett has personally known several victims of breast cancer, including her father's wife, and she says when the disease "hit home," she became more passionate about promoting events such as the staff's blue tie day in support of men's cancer awareness.

"The week before homecoming we had blue tie day for the staff (...) and I think it's really cool that we can all come together for good causes like that," Bennett said. "This being breast cancer awareness month, I thought it would be great if we could do a pink tie Friday or a pink out Friday."

Through philanthropic outlets, students are able to use a devastating circumstance to positively affect the lives of those in their community who are also experiencing the effects of breast cancer.

"Just get involved," Yanez said. "(You can) volunteer at the walk or fundraise for the American Cancer Society. It's all good for the cause."

An important aspect of breast cancer awareness month is the emphasis placed on early detection.

"You have to know what to look for," Bennett said. "So (awareness campaigns) put an emphasis on self-testing and mammograms."

Those who are able to get treatment early are most likely to go into remission.

"When people can recognize the signs of cancer and get treatment while it's still in its early stages, (the cancer) is curable most of the time," Heather Ribolla (10), Relay for Life participant and daughter of a breast cancer survivor, said.

1 in 8
women will eventually experience invasive breast cancer during her life.

SOURCE: BREASTCANCER.ORG

However, though awareness and fundraising are integral parts of events such as Making Strides Against Breast Cancer, many participants view these occasions as a way to honor cancer survivors, as well as to remember those who have passed away.

"For breast cancer awareness, pink isn't just a color; it's an attitude," Yanez said. "You have to have a mindset that you can make a change."

PHOTOS BY WILLIAM NGO

Band members rehearse for performances within city, share appreciation of music with local audiences

BY WILLIAM NGO
Executive Editor

Scoring songs and new fans, student-led bands have hit all the right notes while bursting into the city's vibrant music scene. With notable venues and state-of-the-art equipment, their tunes and dreams amplify across the school and community.

Michael Delzoppo (11) plays the bass with a seven-person heavy rock group, Sindicate. In addition to playing his instrument, Delzoppo is considered the lyricist, having written poetry for nearly seven years. The musicians' first gig was recently held at C2G Music Hall, a downtown site capable of holding 600 standing people.

Delzoppo plays for his church worship team and had played prior to joining the band; with that experience, he gained the technique needed to enhance his musicality. In terms of his future, he wishes to surround himself with music, possibly writing or producing for another artist.

"Being a musician is kind of hard, but just keep on going. It doesn't matter if you're good or not. If you love it, keep on doing it," Delzoppo said.

As if school is not enough of a responsibility, Aaron Stone (9) beats the drums for two different bands, Sindicate and Bear in a Phone Booth.

> "I want to play music for as long as I can. (I) would love see each (band) go as far as it possibly could and be as successful as possible, but as of right now, it's just about making good music."
>
> **SAM STONE (9)**
> *Student Musician*

Stone has been an official Sindicate member for no longer than a month but has been playing with Bear in a Phone Booth since his seventh grade year.

Stone and his friends rehearsed and participated in a talent show at Summit Middle School and have been playing alternative music together since. For him, music serves as an outlet to escape and relieve stress.

"I want to play music for as long as I can," Stone said. "(I) would love see each (band) go as far as it possibly could and be as successful as possible, but as of right now, it's just about making good music."

Sam Byus (9), a leader of a different student band, had received advice from his instructor to play with other musicians and form a band, having practiced at Sweetwater Sounds for some time. Byus now leads his group, The Melon Collies, providing the vocals and guitar for a group that has adopted a bluesy sound.

"(Joining a band) is a great thing," Byus said. "It opens your eyes to other varieties of music, other ways people play. I would encourage any musician to get in a band or some kind of group."

With the leadership role, his responsibilities range from announcing practice times to accepting and distributing any gig money. The Melon Collies have been able to exhibit their passion for music through live performances at C2G Music Hall and the Sweetwater Stage and at reputable events, such as the Taste of the Arts Summer Festival.

Byus and his group occasionally cover popular songs in order to gain interest from the younger generation. With a dream to close out shows, he hopes to continue to play with The Melon Collies throughout high school, eventually create his own songs and see where his music takes him in life.

"10 years old is when I started to get into music," Byus said. "It's when I really started to want to meet with people, want to play shows, It's impacted me in many (positive) ways. It's helped me looked at situations in my life differently."

Top: Members of Sindicate practice for upcoming gigs. Above: Drummer Sam Stone (9) beats along to the piano and guitar melodies. Left: Michael Delzappo (11) focuses solely on upcoming chords during a break from singing while strumming.

Tutoring programs gather widespread recognition

Student volunteers work to teach younger students, strive to expand organizations to broader community

BY JESSICA TEBBEN
Life Editor

The definition of tutoring programs within the school is generally peers helping peers. However, student volunteers are branching out past the school walls and into the community, hoping to spread the light of learning to more even more kids who need a little extra help.

The after school tutoring program for children in elementary school called Project READS meets on Tuesdays in the IMC, where student volunteers aid children in reading ease and comprehension. The tutoring session begins with group story time and moves into one-on-one time with a tutor, ending with games and a snack.

According to Project READS advisor Deb Dutton, the goal for the program is to make the children feel less like they need help and more like they're part of something special and fun.

"I don't think (the children) look at (the program) as 'Oh, I need help so I have to go to this place,'" Dutton said. "I've never heard any of the kids act like that or say that, which makes me feel good because I don't want them to feel that way."

Not only does the laid back feel of the program make it unique to the school, but also the fact that students and tutors get to work one-on-one for an hour, something that many of the children are unable to do at home.

"(The children) get to work one-on-one with somebody, so they get that extra help they need," Mandy Johnson (12), volunteer tutor, said. "I can focus on different things with them that they might need (extra) help with."

While Project READS targets younger grades, a new tutoring program, the Student Learning Alliance (SLA) is venturing far beyond just Southwest Allen County middle schools and into places that are in need of tutors, such as the Boys and Girls Club.

Originally coined by students, the idea for community enrichment has spread quickly, attracting dozens of volunteers.

"(The main goal of the program) is trying to reach out to people that maybe haven't had academic success, whether it's because of poverty or other factors (from which) maybe they've missed some of the opportunities to really excel academically," Miller said.

While the main goal of the SLA initially appeals to most students, other factors have intrigued students and advisors alike.

"I really appreciate the idea that they are trying to reach out to the community," Miller said. "Multiculturalism and globalism are parts of my coursework and studies, so it's something I'm passionate about and the kids are passionate about. I wanted to be able to help them."

Although Project READS and SLA reach out to different communities, they both have the same effect on the volunteers who get to experience firsthand the academic struggles that children and peers face every day.

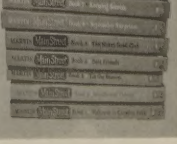
"(Volunteering) makes (students) feel good not only about what they're doing and giving, but it (also) makes them feel good when they see the kids succeeding because that's a big reflection on their help and what they're doing," Dutton said.

While volunteers express the joy that have for teaching those who need taught, perhaps the most rewarding part of the job is seeing the kids realize their full potential.

"It's just kind of fun to see kids that are struggling, kids that don't really have good self-esteem or are timid and shy, to kind of have that light bulb moment go on," Dutton said.

BETWEEN THE LINES

Although the Student Learning Alliance and Project READS extend help to different communities, their separate environments do not affect their common goal--educating children who struggle academically. Their focus on core subjects, especially reading, is vital in order for the students to grow. The children within the program receive a mentor and an appreciation for working hard. The skills taught during the one-hour sessions not only develop the foundation for education and career in the future, but enhance social skills and encourage reading for enjoyment.



October provides the most thrill throughout year

This is my favorite time of year. The leaves are turning, the weather is perfect and the skeleton jokes come creeping out of the closet to make their overused but nonetheless amusing return. As soon as the clock hits midnight on Oct. 1, it's as if the spooky switch flips on and everything is in Halloween mode. And thus, the undeniably best month of the entire year begins.

Some might say October isn't even the real beginning of fall, September is. Of course, they're wrong. To get this straight, September is generally hotter than heck and should still be considered a summer month. October is when things actually start getting chilly and when the leaves start changing.

The real issue with October weather is the fluctuation of temperature. In the mornings, you feel like you're going to freeze as soon as you step outside of your house. But when you get into your car to leave school in the afternoon, it feels like you're entering a sauna. That's just one of the minor setbacks of October. Everything else is pretty great.

JESS SAYIN'

BY JESSICA TEBBEN
Life Editor

Despite the weather being nearly perfect, October is the best month simply because Halloween is the best holiday. You get to dress up like an idiot and run around your neighborhood and get free candy and, frankly, who doesn't love that?

In October, teachers start putting up some super special Halloween decorations which are a little cliche and are a lot my favorite part about coming to school during the fall. As the lunchroom transforms from bland and cold to creepy-crawly and still cold, I transform into a passionate Halloween fanatic.

Suddenly, I decide I really like horror movies even though I don't. I also have the overwhelming urge to make a stop at one of the haunted attractions around town. I hate those too. But October and Halloween just don't feel the same without the occasional gut-wrenching shriek. Not to mention Disney Channel Halloween movies make their annual return, and who doesn't love those?

The approach of Halloween also gives me an excuse to overuse the phrases like "so spooky" and "super creepy."

Of course, the preparation for Halloween is half the fun. You pick out the perfectly round pumpkin and take it home and plan out this perfect face and then carve it perfectly or paint it perfectly, depending on your preference. I'm not so good at carving pumpkin faces, but it makes me happy so I do it anyway.

In fact, I might just have to step it up this year and add some more realistic features to my pumpkin like some eyelashes or something. I can't get too carried away, though, or else it might look scary. And not the good Halloween scary, either.

Perhaps before the pumpkin-carving, or maybe after, you start to talk to friends about what you should wear. Of course, Halloween is the perfect excuse to look as dumb as possible, so why not go all out? I personally was thinking about my costume for this year as soon as I got home from running around my neighborhood last year.

Just to clear some things up: yes, I still go trick-or-treating. No, I am not ashamed. Like I said, free candy! It baffles me how many people pass up that opportunity for free seasonal delicacies such as mini Kit-Kat bars and the occasional box of raisins.

Anyway, the costuming process can sometimes be difficult, and you may have to throw something together at the last minute, but it will be worth it because Halloween is the coolest and you will be too, no matter what you're wearing.

> "This is it. This is the night I've been waiting 365 days for. It's finally here."
>
> **JESSICA TEBBEN**

This year, rather than going around my neighborhood, I think I'm going to spook some kids as they come up to my front door and then steal candy from my brother and sister later. My partner-in-crime and I are planning on buying masks and everything, so here's your warning: don't come to my house on Halloween. It's going to be pretty spooky.

As the sun disappears over the horizon and the moon comes out, I hurtle into a full Halloween frenzy. This is it. This is the night I've been waiting 365 days for. It's finally here.

And then, just like that, you're back at home with a pillowcase full of candy and nowhere else to go. House lights flicker off and the only evidence that Halloween even happened is the occasional candy wrapper in the middle of the street and your sense of accomplishment. Another successful year of candy collecting has passed, and everything went just as you hoped it would go.

At least that's always what happens to me. So then I'm left with an abundance of candy, half of which I probably won't even eat. The other half will last me until at least Easter when I can stock up on the chocolate again. But Halloween will be over, and the atmosphere along with it is ephemeral; it will come just as fast as it goes.

So as you stuff your face with Snickers bars, just remember you only have 365 more days until Halloween. And next year you can make everything even creepier.

PHOTO BY MEGAN BUTLER

THE RETURN OF THE SCARES

Classic scare attractions reopen their doors to students

BY AWBREI VACHON
Writer

The temperature is dropping, the sweatshirts and boots are coming out and the autumn scented candles are beginning to fill everybody's house with a warm and comfortable sense of fall.

One of the most favorable parts of the October month is perhaps the reappearance of haunted houses.

For individuals looking to have a good time and get into the Halloween spirit, going to haunted houses is a must-do in order for it to really feel like fall.

Places like the Haunted Cave and the Haunted Jail are doing all they can to make sure they do their parts.

The Haunted Cave, located on Arden Drive in Fort Wayne, opens every year at the end of September and extends on to just past Halloween to ensure everybody has the chance to come and experience the fun and fear the Haunted Cave has to offer.

Considering this is the 15th year it has been open, one might say the Haunted Cave has been offering enough to leave its customers craving more.

If there is anything about being terrorized and being jumped out at which makes going to haunted houses worth the trip, high school students know what it is.

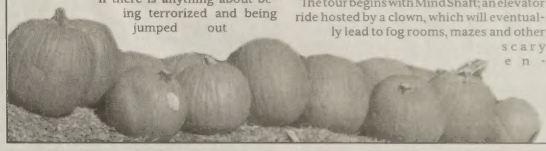
"People like getting scared," Marie Hege (11) said. "All the props and stuff they have in (the haunted houses) look pretty realistic so it really sets the mood for Halloween."

Planning the course for haunted houses is a lot of work no doubt, including prerequisites like making sure there are exits everywhere, building skillful props and making sure attendants are scared but not in danger.

> **▶300**
>
> plus volunteers consisting of Cub Scouts, Boys Scouts, Girl Scouts and Venturing Program help at the Haunted Castle.
>
> SOURCE: INDIANAHAUNTS.ENTER.COM

"I thought they did a very good job overall," Gaby Meissner (10) said. "I don't get scared very easily, but there were a few times that I got startled, which made it more interesting."

The tour begins with Mind Shaft; an elevator ride hosted by a clown, which will eventually lead to fog rooms, mazes and other scary endeavors.



The Haunted Jail, like the Haunted Cave, also provides spooks and thrills down in Columbia City. Brayden Law (10) was able to volunteer at the Columbia City site two years ago.

"When I worked (at the Haunted Jail), I worked in the basement and I controlled this dragon that would pop out at people," Law said. "There were always different reactions, (and seeing them) was probably the best part (of volunteering there)."

Despite getting to see people's reactions, Law admitted the experience was not as fun as he expected it to be, and found it was quite time consuming.

"I only worked (there) a couple of times," Law said. "If you really want to do it, just ask the people there."

Although he did not help set up and prepare for the season, Law knows a lot of hard work and dedication goes into making the experience worthy.

"They work on it all summer and they have to (rebuild) some of the walls in there," Law said. "(The manager) was really into it, and he took it to the next level."

The Haunted Jail is not just open for Halloween though. It also hosts a Nightmare Before Christmas special.

Whether it is the Haunted Cave or the Haunted Jail, Halloween or the Nightmare Before Christmas, there is no doubt participants are in for a good time.

"I've been to the (Haunted) Cave a few times and it's just different every year," Meissner said. "It's definitely worth the ten bucks."

Seasonal perks excite student body

Family time, Thanksgiving traditions and weather help shape upcoming season

BY HAMNA QURESHI
Writer

With the entrance of fall comes the piqued interest for specialty fall foods. Many of these specialty foods include items from chain stores such as the Pumpkin Spice Latte from Starbucks and the Pumpkin Spice Blizzard from Dairy Queen, but they also include other homemade foods which are primarily enjoyed during Thanksgiving.

"I love anything pumpkin flavored like the Pumpkin Pie Blizzard or the Pumpkin Spice Latte," Emily Herbert (12) said. "I especially like the Pumpkin Pie Blizzard because it is the perfect combination of cozy fall and chilly winter."

> "Fall is perfect in every way - the brisk weather, the changing leaves, the approaching holiday season, everything."
>
> **EMILY HERBERT (12)**
> *Fall Fan*

The fact these specialty fall foods are only available for a limited amount of time makes them more appealing to the students.

"I like the anticipation of being able to have (my favorite foods) again," Megan McCracken (12) said. "If I had it all year long, it probably wouldn't be my favorite food."

Availability of fall foods affects how popular they become within the community during the short time they are being sold.

"I would think that (the foods') constant availability would make them lose their fall appeal," Herbert said.

Chain stores are not the only places to find specialty fall foods. Many families have special Thanksgiving traditions which make the fall season even more enjoyable for students.

"Thanksgiving makes me full of happiness," McCracken said. She enjoys the rolls and turkey most.

Jacob Wyrick (12) agrees with McCracken, believing fall is the best season in terms of food and Thanksgiving foods are especially good.

"I love all Thanksgiving foods equally," Wyrick said. "If I have to choose my top three (foods) they would be Turkey, with gravy of course, mashed potatoes and stuffing."

Along with food, fall holds appeal for other reasons as well. Thanksgiving allows families to come together for a few days and celebrate the season with each other.

"I always celebrate Thanksgiving with my family. Because my immediate family does not live near any extended family, the four of us often have our own celebration and are sometimes joined by an aunt, uncle or grandparent. That always make it more special," Herbert said.

For some families, Thanksgiving is the transition period to winter holiday season.

"All of my family gets together and have Thanksgiving," McCracken said. "We usually go see Santa light up downtown and sometimes go see the most popular Thanksgiving movie."

Some families are more casual about their Thanksgiving festivities.

"(Thanksgiving) is usually just eating a large meal with family and then all falling asleep watching the afternoon football games," Wyrick said.

The autumn weather also makes this season enjoyable for students. This season is the mix between winter and summer, so the weather is ideal for many people.

"Fall is perfect in every way--the brisk weather, the changing leaves, the approaching holiday season, everything," Herbert said. "I love the weather (...) and the general overarching good mood that can be felt."

For students, the fall season is about more than just the food; it is about spending time with loved ones and enjoying the autumn mood.

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SPORTS

PHOTO BY MEGAN BUTLER

ATHLETE SPOTLIGHT: KYLE BOWERS

PHOTO BY REAGAN MINCELL

Motocross is often not considered a popular sport, but it had been an active part of Kyle Bowers' (12) life since he was a child. Despite the possibility of injuries, Bowers has found Motocross to be the sport for him, unable to turn down the rush and thrill of motocross.

Spartana: What is motocross?

Bowers: It is racing dirt bikes. It is competitive racing for all ages of riders. You can do it outside or inside or a little bit of both. Sometimes it happens in stadiums like Lucas Oil. I prefer outdoor riding; it is a lot more fun. It is more wide open, and there is a lot more room and more speed. It also hurts a lot more when you fall.

Spartana: What sparked your interest in motocross?

Bowers: My dad bought me a little dirt bike when I was 5 years old. I've been riding ever since, going up to Michigan and playing on the trails. I probably started (competing) two years ago.

Spartana: Have injuries affected your participation?

Bowers: Yes. I have been out for two months now because of a broken arm. (I broke) both bones in my arm, and that sucked. I was practicing for a race, for the night show, and I misjudged a jump and overshot it. I launched the one afterwards and ended up falling from about 20 feet up in the air. The EMS asked me, "20 feet, how are you still walking?" I did not even know it was broken until after the fact because of all of the adrenaline. My arm was just kind of hanging there. I knew it was going to hurt so bad once I realized what happened and the adrenaline wore off.

Spartana: Where do you see your motocross career taking you?

Bowers: I would like to go to Loretta Lynn and just race the Amateur Nationals. Loretta Lynn Motocross Ranch hosts the Amateur Nationals every year. It's the biggest amateur race in the United States. A lot of people compete.

Spartana: What is the most interesting thing you are able to do?

Bowers: Probably fly. It's really cool; motocross is just not like any other sport. You're going a lot faster, obviously jumping and stuff like that. It is not your standard sport and not a lot of people can do it.

Spartana: What events have you already partaken in?

Spartana: What lessons has the sport taught you?

Bowers: How to fall. It has actually taught me a lot about discipline. It has taught me how to judge things and not to do things that are way out of my ability level, because that's how my broken arm happened. Motocross is a lot of fun; it's taught me how to have a good time.

--Tessa Lutz

PHOTOS BY MEGAN BUTLER

A FIGHT TO THE FINISH

Boys team ends season with tough loss at Sectionals match against North Side

By Ethan Yde
Writer

Although the boys varsity soccer team was defeated in the Sectional Championship against North Side, the lessons taken away from the season were valuable. The athletes put up a fight despite the difficulties they faced. Overall, the team persevered through the entire tournament with resilience and teamwork.

"It was so bittersweet. We prepared for this game since the beginning of the season, and the toughest moment was walking off of the field for the last time with nothing to hold our heads up," Alex Kunce (12) said.

> "It was so bittersweet. We prepared for this game since the beginning of the season, and the toughest moment was walking off the field for the last time with nothing to hold our heads up."
>
> **ALEX KUNCE (12)**
> *Center Back*

The game started out with a wake-up call through a shock of overwhelming and unexpected plays from North Side.

The opposing team dominated the half, leaving the home players in awe. Not much action happened from then on until the second half, which was full of penalties and heated arguments from both sides.

"We took away from the game that there was no one to blame but ourselves. We should have done something about the score sooner in the game," Kunce said.

Tempers began to flare with about 15 minutes remaining in the game. A disputed call was made which gave the Spartans a penalty kick, and Anthony Jimenez (12) kicked it to the back of the net to score the first goal of the game. A verbal fight broke out between the North Side coach and the referee, and a malevolent shove on the field further fueled tensions.

"I wish that we could have dealt with the referee's decisions a little bit better than we did," Nick Anderson (11) said.

The game was emotional, to say the least. Coaches and players were in heated disputes with the referees, for mistaken calls and attitudes which spiraled out of hand.

Four red cards were dished out, and according to players and fans, none of them were deserved.

"We worked on possessing the ball better and get more opportunities on goal. All of our players were key to the team, and we needed for everyone to be in it to get the win," Travis Wyss (12) said.

Although the team attempted to work as a single unit, it was not enough to overpower North Side.

After North Side scored a last minute goal, the game went into overtime, and a miscommunication between the goalie and defender in the very last minute ended the game with an unsatisfactory result.

Top: David Rincon (11) performs a penalty kick during the Sectionals game held at the school. Bottom: Anthony Jimenez (12) and Natu McCarthy (12) celebrate a goal.

The post-game talk with head coach Mike Houser was quick, and the handshakes with the other team were full of dejection and disappointment.

It is inevitable any team will feel bad about a loss, especially in a championship, but it was well fought on the boys' part. The athletes played with a passion for the sport they love and an undying desire for fierce competition.

"What I took out of that game and the entire season is that life is ten percent of what happens to you, and ninety percent of how you react to it. Sure, we had a few discrepancies with the referee, but we could have done a bit better to produce the outcome we were going for," Anderson said.

Long term injuries impede athletes' entire seasons

Students suffer harsh reality of playing sports, sideline team always ready and alert to treat accidents

By Austen Cummings
Writer

The global issue concerning sports related injuries had recently affected a crop of the school's athletes.

For example, one of the football team's vital players, Gunnar Goebel (11) was severely hurt during a play at the team's last home game.

"I was going in for a tackle on Carroll's quarterback from the side and so was one of my teammates," Goebal said. "I ended up hitting the crown of my head on my teammate's torso."

The football team was playing Carroll High School Oct. 4, and in the middle of the game, Goebel was taken off the field on a gurney.

"The pain at first was bad on initial contact. Then on the ground, it really wasn't that much pain, but I felt something wrong and I felt like I shouldn't get up," Goebel said.

Goebel ended up fracturing the spinous process located on the C7 and T1 vertebrae.

"I've been staying positive and thinking about how I'm going to play next year and hopefully I'll be able to try out for the basketball team. With the help of God and prayer, I've been able to see the best of the situation," Goebel said.

In situations like Goebel's mishap, athletic trainer Todd Jenkins provides aid to the players until they can be treated further.

When someone is injured on the field or court, Jenkins is one of the first people to be at the player's side to help alleviate instantaneous problems.

"(The aids) make sure (athletes) have a clear airway and are breathing; we also look to see how they are moving and what they seem to be favoring," Jenkins said. We also keep them still to prevent them from further hurting themselves."

Sprains and strains are a couple accidents which trainers see the most. Despite common misconception, there is a clear difference between the two injuries. Sprains involve the tendons and ligaments while strains correlate with the muscles.

"Head injuries are the scariest injuries, and the reason would be is there is a bunch of different types of head injuries. There are not just concussions," Jenkins said. "They can all behave very similar, so it's tough to see if it's something we can care for on our own or if it's something really serious and if they need to get to a hospital right away."

Similarly, soccer player Hannah Dolfuss (10) is one of many athletes who felt the negative repercussion of playing sports.

"It was one of our last games of summer league, and (the referee) blew the whistle and like two seconds after the game started, I took a step forward and my knee popped inside and tore my ACL," Dolfuss said.

With an injury the trainer cannot see, Jenkins recommends the athlete seek medical assistance.

"Right after my injury, I went to the clinic at Orthopedics North East," Dolfuss said. "Right after my surgery they had me up and walking. I was off my crutches in a week and a half and I've been going to physical therapy twice a week since my surgery."

The severity of sports related injuries can vary, but ultimately, these injuries have the ability to affect an athlete's entire season.

"It affected me because I couldn't play and I love playing," Dolfuss said. "That was really disappointing. I think it affected the team a little bit because I was the starting mid-fielder, but they have done really well so far this year and I'm really proud of how they are doing."

BREAKING NEWS

62 percent of high school sports injuries occur during practice

40 percent of all sports-related injuries are from children ages 5 to 14

21 percent of all traumatic brain injuries connect back to sports

3.5 million children under 14 receive medical treatment for sports

2 million injuries are accounted by high school athletes per year

SOURCE: STOPSPORTSINJURIES.ORG

Students support sports programs more than others

At the dismay of many of my peers, I have to admit I have never been crazy about the school's Friday night football games.

I will probably be shunned for not relishing in the last moments of socialization and excitement as a high school student, but I have made my rounds as a painter and a fan and cannot genuinely say I am sad it is over.

From matching attire to in-sync chants, the football fans are a massive army which is ready to throw itself into any situation for its team.

So the controversy arises when I think of the school spirit for the football games compared to any other sport. There is a clear classification of the order in which students support their fellow athletes. Speaking for my peers, the order of most supported to least supported sports is as follows:

1. Succeeding or nearly equivalent to the football student section, is the basketball fandom. An identical energy is carried over from fall to winter as the craziest themes arise once again. The school spirit dominates the team on the opposite side of the court, and the basketball players are idolized by the hundreds in the stands. It feels natural for things to be this way, but it seems as though every other sport's school spirit bows down in comparison.

2. I love basketball, but I have also grown to enjoy soccer. Among the multitude of sports available at the school, boys soccer measures next in line in regards to school spirit. Ironically, most games do not produce a viable amount of fans, but interestingly enough the annual Canterbury game sparks more attention than most of the football and basketball games. It is a highly anticipated match against the school's biggest rival, and despite the outcome, it never lacks to encourage school spirit.

HAIDEN'S HIGHLIGHTS

BY HAIDEN STEINGASS
Sports Editor

3. Volleyball falls into third place, reeling in the most attention out of all the girls sports. Sitting through three to five games may seem like a lengthy endeavor, but over the years, students have risen to the occasion to cheer on the female athletes.

4. Though a club sport, hockey draws in some of the craziest, proudest fans. There is always a constant student section which influences the game with its spirit. The violent nature of the game rears an exciting yet vulnerable atmosphere as the fans sit on the edge of their seats in anticipation of the next brawl.

5. I have only attended one baseball game, but I cannot say it had much influence on me. Although, it seems only appropriate to rank the sport in fifth place. The much subtler student sections draws in fans from time to time with an occasional increase in turnout.

6. The clarity of the next deserving sport is not easy to determine, so I will go with lacrosse since it is known for its rough nature, as well. I have never been to a boys or girls game, but I have seen some unappealing bruises and cuts from the athletes.

7. It is a shot in the dark now, but lucky number seven is tennis. The quiet sport gains so much attention in the world of professional sports. However, the school does not produce much of a fan group.

8. Unfortunately, our sports fans have dwindled at this point, and I cannot say whether it is swimming, rugby, golf, cross country or track which should be awarded with the last title.

To clarify, I do not in any way consider my list to depict the sports in order of importance. But from my observations, sports with the most action or violence seem to take leading spots.

Most of us do not take into consideration why we do not attend the less popular sports, because our school spirit is practically thrown into football and basketball. Just imagine that amount of fans piled into the bleachers at a tennis match. We would be flowing onto the courts.

PUSHING THE LIMIT

Cross country runners run head to head against other competing schools during a race.

Runners prepare for upcoming competitions with updated regime

BY ADAM SWIATKOWSKI
Writer

As the girls cross country team shifts its focus to the postseason, it is expecting to be a challenging competitor at the Sectional Invitational.

"We are hoping to come out in the top two of our sectional," Grace Walther (10) said. "There have been a few (runners) who have been struggling in the first part of the season, so we are hoping for redemption."

The girls have begun changing their practice routine and method of taking care of their bodies in anticipation of the first meet of tournament season.

> "This is something that we have been training for and we have had it in our minds that we are going to state. It is not an option."
>
> **WHITNEY CARROLL (12)**
> *Runner*

The coaches are also implicating a taper into upcoming practices to allow the runners some rest after meets, especially following Sectionals.

"Our practices have been becoming more intense, so we have bumped our mileage and our speed (of intervals)," Whitney Carroll (12) said. "We are trying everything we can to do things ahead of time so we can achieve personal records during our sectional runs."

Focus at the moment is being placed on the sectional meet, but the team is also keeping an outlook on later invitationals, including Conference, Semi-State and ultimately, State.

"Our goal is to get back to the state meet and finish higher than last year, (where we) finished fifteenth," Sara Wyss, coach, said. "Looking ahead is good, but it should not be emphasized. We believe in taking (the season) one meet at a time and focusing on the meet at hand."

This rival is instilling a mindset of change in the team as Sectional runners want to develop a new strategy to ensure success.

"Carroll is known for their pack running and we need to adopt somewhat of a similar strategy," says Carroll. "We also need to pay attention to where we are placed amongst the other competitors during the race."

Pack running could be used to the girls' advantage and will allow the runners to stay motivated during the run and continue to push towards the finish.

Keeping together allows runners to keep spirits high throughout the run.

"If there's a teammate around me then I will definitely talk to them," Walther said. "I communicate and encourage them to keep our confidence high."

Coaches have also underscored the importance of individual place over time.

Though personal best times are an important goal for the girls, placement allows the least points to be accumulated in the sectional meet, as the lower score wins in a cross country meet.

"The coaches emphasize closing time gaps between (our top seven runners), because the (last two runners) become the pushers for the other schools," Wyss said. "They can raise the score of another school and also become our tiebreakers. At Sectionals, place is more important than the time you run."

The result at the Northrop Sectional will set the tone for the remainder of the season. The team believes wholeheartedly it will be able to achieve a spot in the State Finals.

"This is something that we have been training for and we have had it in our minds that we are going to state," Carroll said. "It is not an option. It would be exciting to improve on our finish and come into the top ten to medal at State, but Sectionals will set the stage."

ACROSS THE BOARD

This year, the girls cross country team raced and finished with an impressive second place at Sectionals, improving from last year. In 2012, the girls had ran their way to a third place finishing.

This year, Madison Distelrath (9) joins the cross country team and leads her fellow team members. Although only a freshman, she is ranked number one on the team. Her personal record time is 18:43, justifying her outstanding position and hard work.

Community supports recovering athlete

Events and fundraisers honor Columbia City's Sam Dailey after head injury

BY SYDNEY ISROFF
Business Manager

Sam Dailey, a senior at Columbia City High School suffered a serious injury during a Friday night football game. Dailey was hospitalized for about two weeks and went through various surgeries.

The Columbia City community organized an event this past Saturday to raise money to contribute payment for Dailey's medical bills. Other events have been taking place to raise money for the family. The local Dairy Queen is fundraising through the campaign "Do it for Dailey."

Coach Zolman and members of the school football team participated in the fundraiser on Saturday Oct. 12.

During the home game against Columbia City, the boy painters painted the injured player's name on their backs to show support to Columbia City. The team also provided a sign to hang from the student section during the game. During halftime, the boys walked over to the Columbia City side to reveal to their parents and student section what they did to support Dailey.

> "I thought it would be a good way to show that the football rivalries don't really matter in situations like these."
>
> **LOGAN ORMSBY (11)**
> *Football Player*

The fundraiser took place Saturday, Oct. 12 at the Whitley County 4-H grounds off US 30, from 4 to 9 p.m. In order to raise money, there was a silent auction taking place throughout the night. There was also roasted hog, side dishes and desserts along with live music. The food, music and parking was all free along with admission.

Donations were then accepted to help pay for the ongoing medical expenses in support of the Dailey family.

There was a successful turn out to support Dailey as members of the community and surrounding communities came out for the event.

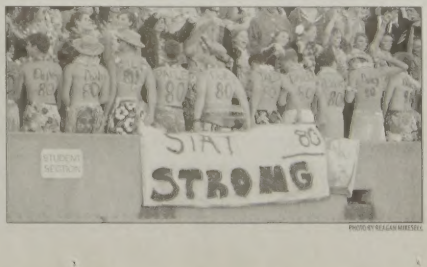
Players of the football team also attended the fundraiser.

"I thought it would be a good way to show that the football rivalries don't really matter in situations like these," Logan Ormsby (11) said.

Not only did school players show up to support the event, players from across the conference paid their respects at the fundraiser to support Dailey.

The community has also been selling wristbands and t-shirts with the quote "Do it for Dailey" on them and the proceeds are going toward the medical expenses.

"It went well, more people came out than expected," Kyle Mohsenzadeh (12) said. The turnout of the community and surrounding communities gave the family support and hope while Dailey undergoes recovery."



The spirited student section extended its support to Sam Dailey during a football game against Columbia City. Dailey was injured during a game on Aug. 23. All proceeds will help cover his medical bill.

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Then & NOW

By Allie Nelson
Executive Editor

Unprecedented updates, unforgettable trends and increasing sizes within the last two decades shaped the students and faculty through unified experience. For former students, the school embodies youth. For current pupils, the school represents education and for loyal teachers, it is home.

STUDENT SECTION

Although the student section has increased in power in more recent years, the opportunities available to students result in only a portion of the student body participating. In the past decades, the ratio of students to those in the student section has lessened.

"Almost everybody went to almost all of the games, especially the weekend games," Vail said. "I like football so I would follow along, but there's a big social component also. It was the place to be."

The presence of almost all students at the game provided school unity which could not be provided by other events. School spirit, a priority for many, established a positive, proud environment for students to take part in.

PHOTO BY REAGAN MINESELL

Nick Van Burk (12) leads the painters to celebrate a football touchdown.

FASHION

Decades are often characterized by different aspects of life. Whether it's music, food or lifestyle, a new age brings new culture.

"When I was a student everything was very preppy," Vail said. "You wore high-waisted jeans and polo's and baggy jeans and everyone was pretty covered up. There were no yoga pants. If you dressed down you wore sweatpants."

Although some styles were more popular in the 1980's and 1990's, certain attire will never go out of style.

"You look around and it probably hasn't changed a whole lot," Steve Lake, assistant principal, said. "You know, blue jeans, sweatshirts. It hasn't changed that much."

> "When I was a student everything was very preppy. You wore high-waisted jeans and polo's and baggy jeans and everyone was covered up."
>
> **BEKKI VAIL**
> *Former Student and Science Teacher*

Tori Casaburo (10)

TEACHER RELATIONSHIPS

Increased education responsibilities and additional morning collaborations allow teachers little free time to associate with co-workers.

"It's harder to find time for the personal relationships because it seems that whenever you're with other teachers, it's a meeting situation," Moss said. "There is not a lot of time for the personal interaction that we used to have."

Arguably, the diminishing connection between teachers can be harmful, as there is less camaraderie and communication.

BUILDING

Recognizing the crowded cafeteria and jammed hallways, students rush to the lengthy cafeteria lines and plan alternate routes to classes. Unknown to them, the school was not originally constructed to house the amount of students it holds now. Although reconstructions have been executed, the building had always been the same structure.

"The cafeteria was in the same spot but it was a quarter of the size," Vail said. "My graduating class had about 250 students, so the building now is twice the size it was when I was in school."

The transformation of what was once the middle school into what is now the freshman academy impacts teacher relations and ultimately increases the size of the building.

"We're so spread apart," April Moss, teacher, said. "We're so big. I'll go months without seeing teachers. We used to have a teachers' lounge where we would meet in the mornings. Now we are very busy before school and the building itself caused a lot that. I never see (freshman academy) teachers."

CURRICULUM

It is a fundamental truth. As the population increases, so does the competition. Because standards for college admissions continue to rise, states change their class qualifications, increase standardized tests and expect more.

"I think it's definitely gotten a lot harder," Natalie Chadwell (12) said. "I think over time the curriculum has to become more challenging because of the education needed for jobs and college."

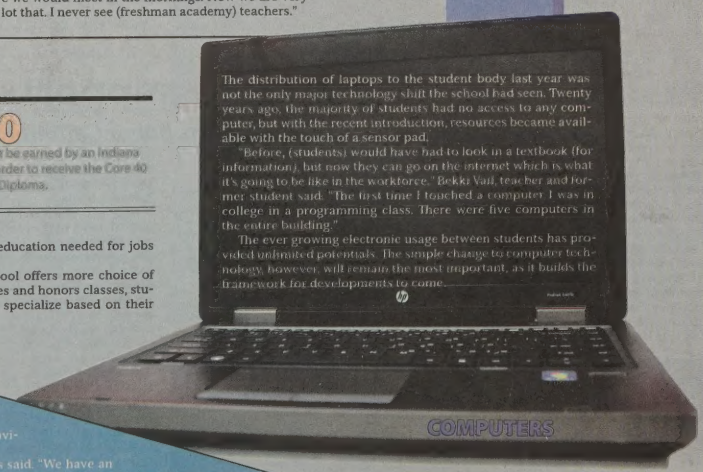
Along with the growing challenges, the school offers more choice of courses. Between the added electives, AP courses and honors classes, students can decide where they want to specialize based on their future plans.

40
credits must be earned by an Indiana student in order to receive the Core 40 Academics Diploma.

The distribution of laptops to the student body last year was not the only major technology shift the school had seen. Twenty years ago, the majority of students had no access to any computer, but with the recent introduction, resources became available with the touch of a sensor pad.

"Before, (students) would have had to look in a textbook (for information), but now they can go on the internet which is what it's going to be like in the workforce," Bekki Vail, teacher and former student said. "The first time I touched a computer I was in college in a programming class. There were five computers in the entire building."

The ever growing electronic usage between students has provided unlimited potentials. The simple change to computer technology, however, will remain the most important, as it builds the framework for developments to come.



COMPUTERS

CLUBS

The increase in size has prompted further student involvement in creating unity among those with similar interests.

Current club opportunities differentiate the environment of the school from other years.

"(There are) so many more clubs," Moss said. "We have an abundance of clubs now that we didn't have and every year it seems like we have new ones. With such a diverse population it's easier to fill your clubs. It's easier to appeal to a larger group now. (Clubs are) becoming something for everyone, which didn't used to be the case.

Old and new clubs open their doors to every student, hoping to form bonds and relationships in a enjoyable environment at school.

No matter the changes within the school walls, the inevitable differences must be accepted whether or not they are well-received.

"I think in a lot of ways (the school) has changed for the better," Vail said. "I think that adding technology is positive. I think we have more variety of teaching activities. As far as school spirit, I think that's a negative. There are so many more opportunities of things to do. People are pulled in different directions."

the SPARTANA

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NEWS Administrators discuss future plans of turning the current freshman academy into a senior academy specializing in dual credit classes. 1

OPINION Students take on opposing viewpoints in Left and Write in order to debate the motivations behind the government shutdown. 3

LIFE The truth behind Impact is revealed as Spartana staff members dispel rumors regarding the closed off area of the school. 5

SPORTS The girls soccer team suffers a difficult loss to Valparaiso in the semi-state match, eliminating them from the state tournament. 7

FEATURE Students express concern at the lack of emphasis placed on family dinners as extracurriculars impede the family bonding. 8

Friday, November 1, 2013 | A 2009 Pacemaker Winner | Homestead High School's News Source Since 1969

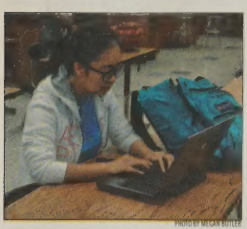

PHOTO BY MEGAN CATER

Academic spell bowl team member Ru Kim (10) works on an online spelling practice created by Stumpf at a recent meeting.

Common App users face glitches

Early action deadlines extended due to Common Application failure

By Ian McKenzie
Copy Editor

As the initial early action deadline for many colleges that are part of the Common Application association approaches, prospective early action college applicants are dealing with frustrating complications as a result of a large software update that has precipitated numerous bugs and errors with the online submission system.

"Common App has communicated with counselors across the country that 'the last few days have comprised the most difficult period in the Common Application's nearly 40 years of service,'" Amy Hamilton, guidance counselor, said. "They have been sending daily updates to the counseling community on how they are fixing the problems."

Established in 1975 with a mere 15 colleges and today with a membership of 517 colleges and universities spanning the United States, the Common Application association started with the goal to provide a common, standardized college application form as a way to expedite the college process for high school seniors. Just last year, over 720,000 applications and 300,000 teacher recommendations were submitted, the latest data points

517 colleges utilize the Common Application for their undergraduate application process.

SEE 'SPELL BOWL,' PAGE 2

Academic spelling team to advance

By Aparna Chintapalli
Writer

The Academic Spell Bowl Team recently competed at a regional competition on Oct. 14 at Hamilton High School. The team took first place in their division, qualifying them to compete at the West Lafayette state competition on Nov. 16.

The Spell Bowl team has been an established club for the past few years, allowing students to express their talent in spelling and keen interest in learning new words. This year, however, marks the first time that the Homestead Spell Bowl team qualified for the state competition.

The team consists of ten members including Nirupama Devanathan, Anna Haller, Kerry Hawken, Emily Lawson, Lauren Hoffmann, Taira Beverly, Christina Jesse, Captain Benjamin Martin, Logan Pollander and Michael Bartz. Headed by Coach Stumpf, these participants meet on a weekly basis to practice spelling and interact with their teammates.

Initially, each team member receives an accumulative packet of 5,000 spelling words to study for the Junior Division of the Indiana Spell Bowl competition. Along with the packet, each week the team works through practice spelling tests on My Big Campus.

"I've always been a grammar perfectionist, so it was natural that I join the Spell Bowl," Logan Pollander (11) said. "I have obviously gained a lot more practice in spelling, but have also been more exposed to the distinct context of words."

During their weekly meetings, the spell bowl team members work together by quizzing each other on difficult words

SEE 'SPELL BOWL,' PAGE 2

PHOTO BY REAGAN MIKESELL

Project Lead the Way biomedical science students Olivia Wood (12) and Cassidy Geller (11) work on a lab. Classes such as this could be placed in the senior academy.

Freshmen academy to be transformed to senior dual credit hub

By Katie Dunlap
News Editor

Plans to transition the ninth grade academy into a center for senior students in the next few years have begun. Though early in the process, ideas are being explored to create a college-like environment for seniors.

"We're throwing concepts together and brainstorming ideas of how we can improve the senior year," Steve Lake, assistant principal, said. "We're looking to find ways that keep seniors more interested in staying in the school (...) We want to excite seniors for their senior year"

The main goal of this project is to expand the opportunities of seniors and help them acclimate to the atmosphere they will experience if they choose to continue on with their education. In this environment, students will have expanded opportunities to earn college credit and have a more flexible schedule.

"It is a work in progress at this point," Steve Yager, superintendent, said. "What we would like to do is make available to seniors a college-like atmosphere. It provides opportunities for seniors to be in and out during the day, and different study venues and opportunities as they move through their final year."

Even if the twelfth grade section is created, students will continue to have access to college credit without leaving campus through a variety of courses. Administrators hope to

SEE 'SENIOR ACADEMY,' PAGE 2

BACK TO THE FUTURE

- **1970** — Homestead High School first opened
- **1976** — Original Woodside Middle School opened
- **1993** — Summit Middle School first opened
- **2005** — Freshmen academy first opened for use.
- **?** — Freshmen academy used as senior academy

SADD club promotes student drug awareness

By Megan Cater
Copy Editor

The week of Oct. 21 was SADD's annual Red Ribbon Week. Similar to years past, students were asked to wear specific red clothing items for the different days of the week.

Red Ribbon Week is aimed at promoting students to be drug free. Coinciding with SADD's mission statement "To provide students with the best prevention and intervention tools possible to deal with the issues of underage drinking, other drug use, impaired driving and other destructive decisions", Red Ribbon Week is a fun way to get the school involved.

"We have an active SADD chapter here at Homestead High School and all active SADD chapters around the nation are encouraged to participate in some way. So we have chosen to try to visually, as well as by spreading the message, get everyone involved to support or promote a drug free lifestyle by setting each day to wear red attire," Stephanie Merkling, SADD adviser and science teacher, said.

"I just don't think people should have to take something to find happiness."
JACK RENDER (12)

The halls were sprinkled with red accessories on

SEE 'SADD,' PAGE 2

Tennis structure to be built

Construction initiated on 'Jimmy Clark' tennis tower project

By Hamna Qureshi
Writer

On Oct. 10, 2013, the Jimmy Clark Community Tennis Center held its groundbreaking at Summit Middle School. This tennis center, along with the new tennis courts, is part of a tribute to the late tennis coach, Jim Clark.

The tennis center aims to engage the community in tennis activities as well as to give people opportunities to interact with each other in a positive environment.

In a video posted to the SACS website, Superintendent Dr. Steve Yager states that the new tennis center will have many new features that the old tennis center did not have.

"As we look to the future, we'll add a building which will include restrooms, concessions, storage and some meeting rooms for teams," Yager said.

Yager also adds that he is pleased with the community's

SERVING IT UP

- **280** thousand dollars already raised.
- **350** thousand dollars needed in total.
- **70** thousand dollars still needed .

There is still a need for additional funds in order to finish the tennis center. Anyone who wishes to contribute to the Jimmy Clark tennis courts can make donations at www.coachjimmyclark.com.

PHOTO BY ALLIE NELSON

SEE 'TENNIS CENTER,' PAGE 2

BRIEFS

CROSS COUNTRY
Congratulations to the boys and girls varsity cross country teams. Both teams placed highly at the semistate competition and consequently qualified for the IHSAA state meet. The two teams will be running in the state meet set to take place tomorrow, Nov. 2 in Terre Haute, Ind.

VISITING COLLEGES
Colleges will be sending an official admissions representatives to visit with prospective junior and senior students in upcoming days. Students wishing to attend need to register in student services and pick up a college visitation pass at least one day prior to the scheduled visit day.

SAT/ACT PREP CLASSES
Classes are being offered to students who plan to take the SAT or ACT. Classes are offered for both the math and verbal portions of the test. Both sessions meet one day a week. The cost is $90 for one session or $170 for both. For more information, contact student services.

ALL-CONFERENCE FOOTBALL
Congratulations to the following football players who were recently given the honor of being named all-conference players: Logan Ormsby, Ben Skowronek, Austin Krider, Zach Alexander, Zach Swarts, Seta Raisuni, Cory Stace, Kyle Mohsenzadeh and Gunnar Goebel.

CLASS RINGS
Jostens will be in the cafeteria today, Nov.1, during all lunch modules to collect order forms for class rings. Anyone wishing to purchase a class ring must remember their $50 deposit and turn it in with their order form. More information can be found at www.jostens.com or in student services.

▶TENNIS CENTER CONTINUED FROM 1

response to the new center in the form of financial support. Fort Wayne Orthopedics is one of the foundations supporting the new tennis center.

"We're very pleased that the community has stepped forward and is helping to(...) fully fund the new Jimmy Clark Foundation Tennis Building," Yager said.

Along with the community, student tennis players are excited about taking advantage of the new courts as well.

"Having new courts has been a motivation for not only the team but for the members of the community to come out and hit," Mitch Gray (12), varsity tennis player, said. "The community now gets the chance to play on some high quality courts and this promotes tennis for all who want to try."

According to Gray, these new courts are better than the old courts because they do not have cracks or slick areas like the old ones did.

"On the old courts, there were cracks and dead spots," Gray said. "Now, with the new courts, you don't have to worry about avoiding these obstacles and you can focus on your game."

Although the girls tennis season is still months away, player Morgan Caudill (12) is also excited about playing on the new courts. She says now that there are more courts, practices will run better than they had in previous years.

PHOTO BY ALLIE NELSON

Two construction workers dig in preparation for the building of the new Jimmy Clark Tennis Center. The groundbreaking ceremony was held on Oct. 10.

"The idea of new courts is exciting and I'm glad we have them. They're a lot nicer than the old ones were," Caudill said. "There are twelve courts now, instead of ten, so there will be more room during practice. There is a lot more room for people to watch our matches, too."

Members of the Southwest Community Tennis Foundation are looking forward to the new Jimmy Clark Community Tennis Center as well. In the video on the SACS website, Cambi Clark, president of the Southwest Community Tennis Foundation and daughter of the late coach, acknowledges the importance of the new tennis center and what it would have meant to Jim Clark.

"As Homestead tennis was continuing to be successful, (my father) wanted to create a community atmosphere and felt that by building new courts that were USTA regulated and bringing it into a more (community centered) atmosphere at Southwest it would be beneficial to both families and the communities to get involved in tennis," Clark said.

Currently, donations are being accepted for the Jimmy Clark Community Tennis Center at www.coachjimmyclark.com. These donations will be used to help build the new tennis center and make it enjoyable and useful for public use.

Tennis player Sam Barrido (11) is one of many who encourages public support of the new courts tennis center.

"As a community we have a great opportunity to be able to play on these tennis courts," Barrido said. "In turn, we must also work together and unite as a community to maintain these beautiful courts."

HOMESTEAD DEBUNKED

Myth: The seven period schedule used in years past will be changing to block scheduling next year.

Status: False - The structure of the schedule will not be transitioning to a block schedule next year, although the school is keeping an open mind for the future.

"(We are) looking at different schedules," Park Ginder, principal, said.

The administration has had discussions about a possible modification and would like for all of the schools in the Southwest Allen County school district (SACS) to be on the same schedule. However, if they would decide in the future to alter the schedule, no plans as to how they would change the structure are confirmed.

"(There has been) no discussion about finalizing it yet," Ginder said. At this point in the school year, the administration has no plans on altering the schedule for next year.

"(We haven't changed) what the schedule looks like for next year," Ginder said. "Block scheduling will not be (the new) schedule for next year. There are different options we are looking at."

Block scheduling is a type of academic scheduling in which each student has fewer classes per day and each class is scheduled for a longer period of time than normal. The seven period schedules may be changed for a different schedule but this is not a primary issue for the administration at this time.

"There hasn't been a lot of discussion about next year's schedule," Ginder said.

A switch in the structure of the schedule of the school day is not a main concern of the administration.

"Block scheduling was not brought up at the school board meeting," Ginder said. "(This change is) not a possibility at Homestead next year."

No changes will be made in the near future, and for now the seven period schedule will remain in place until the administration has further discussion and looks at the other options. The rumor of block scheduling is false; however, the schedule has a chance of changing in the distant future.

--Janay Alberts

▶SPELL BOWL CONTINUED FROM 1

and using other modes of practice.

"Along with the word lists, we specifically examine 'special' words that are hyphenated, have pronouns or even contain more than one word, making them more difficult to master," Jeffrey Stumpf, club adviser, said.

Because there was a larger group of participants on the Spell Bowl team this year, the members encompassed a diverse range of skill, thus allowing them to achieve a high rank while competing with schools throughout Indiana. The spell bowl competition involves each team member of the high school teams to be called up individually. Through a course of nine rounds, each member is taken to an area to write down the correct spelling of the given words.

During the regional competition, Nirupama Devanathan (10) posted a perfect score. She surpassed many other students in demonstrating her skill in spelling.

"I felt relatively nervous during the competition, even though I have had prior experience of participating in the spelling bee and the spell bowl team in middle school," Nirupama said. "Overall, the spell bowl team at the high school level has been great and I have gained good experience."

> "We were amazed to qualify for the state competition because I don't think it has been done before, or at least it hasn't in many years."
>
> **JEFFREY STUMPF**
> *Spell bowl adviser*

Competing against twelve other schools, the spell bowl team achieved first place within their division during the regional competition. The schools were separated into divisions based on population. Within their respective section, the team won by winning the tiebreak. The judges based the winner of the tiebreak on the overall team score, individual members' scores as well as the last round of the competition. As a result, the Homestead Spell Bowl team qualified for the top ten list of schools that are headed to compete at the next level.

"We were amazed to qualify for the state competition because I don't think it has been done before, or at least it hasn't in many years," Stumpf said. "We were definitely fortunate and very happy to take home such a great achievement. The team worked together very well in and outside the competition by studying, practicing and being punctual about everything."

Mastering words like "Croix de guerre" and "Pygmalion," the Spell Bowl has shown great potential in their spelling skills. Students are encouraged to join the spell bowl team to gain insight into the context of words, practice spelling and interact with other students.

"I would definitely recommend other students to join," Michael Bartz (11) said. "My interest in spelling has definitely grown after joining this club, and I enjoy it."

▶COMMON APP CONTINUED FROM 1

culminating a steep growth curve over the past decade for the nonprofit company.

Unfortunately, just as all participating parties have become more dependent on the application than ever, the messy launching of a built-from-scratch software system has bogged down the system as one of the many critical points for high school seniors approaches.

"For IU and Purdue, they will not consider you (for merit scholarships) if you don't have all of your information in (on time)(...) They aren't automatic scholarships anymore but they are selective," Hamilton said.

On the Common Application website, numerous issues are documented, divided into issues that have been fixed and those that have yet to be fixed, and it's been made clear that the people at Common App are working around the clock to alleviate the issues in a timely manner.

One of the more lurking problems to this point has been the recommender interface, which has caused many headaches for teachers already under pressure to get recommendations submitted before the early action deadline.

"It took me awhile to get used to the new interface. It's got a less intuitive interface for teachers (trying to write recommendations) (...) and it asks for information it didn't ask for before," Scott Hill, English teacher, said.

That's not the case for everyone though; problems at this point are scattered and irregular. Hussain Habib (12) hasn't experienced any problems so far, and with the Common Application administration's forthright admission of issues and consequent meticulous work to get the problems fixed as they come in, many problems seem to be clearing up.

"I haven't had any problems with Common App at all. Everything has worked so far and I don't have any concerns," Habib said.

The application has recently seen widespread improvement with the fixing of many issues: problems with the format and submission of supplemental essays, an issue with a glitch in the payment system, causing multiple applications fees to be charged, errors with the submission of transcripts and many other smaller errors that generally impede the expedience of the system.

Even with the overall clearing up of issues, if problems persist, colleges may have no choice but to extend their submission deadlines or offer alternative methods of submission.

"Purdue is extending their (early action deadline) and I've been notified by colleges across the country that they are (pushing those dates back) as well," Hamilton said. "My advice to students would be to confirm with all of their colleges that their information has been received by Common App. Absolutely check with colleges that things have gotten there."

▶SENIOR ACADEMY CONTINUED FROM 1

to expand the opportunities for students to enter college with credits already earned, as it will save money for students.

"(By) offering seniors dual credit and other college courses, we're hoping when (students) graduate (they) could have a year of (their) college career completed," Lake said.

Creating a flexible environment will allow students to stay on campus instead of travelling to different colleges in the area while still receiving credit. Raising the enthusiasm of seniors and helping them enjoy their final year of high school are central focuses of the project.

"We don't want to see kids leave school their senior year to go to St. Francis or IPFW, we want them to stay here, take classes here, and be excited about being here. In order to do that, we need to create an environment that treats them like they're going to be at the next level," Lake said. "We're looking at an environment that is more college-like with more freedom, more class options and different structures of time."

At this point, options are only being explored. No definite plans have been made, but the administrators in charge of the project have been researching how other schools have adapted a 12th grade academy into their systems. At the moment, many schools in the Indianapolis area are discussing the idea, though there are few that have actually completed the project. Administrators are working to decide how the idea can be best adapted to fit the needs of students. What the group of administrators discovers will be presented to the school board later this year.

"We've been putting a lot of research and work into it," Lake said. "This is a new concept. There is no one around that is doing it. Next year, if the school board likes the ideas, we'll be really starting to develop and look at serious ideas."

Moving the freshmen from the academy to the main building is not expected to be too difficult of a transition. Whether or not they will benefit from the shift is unclear.

"It helps freshmen to be separated because they need to get used to high school," Brett Stroud (12) said.

As plans are further developed, the needs of the students are being kept at the center of the planning process. A variety of ideas, such as flexible schedules, labs and additional intramural activities are being explored.

"We're looking at the senior year and trying to come up with ideas of how we can improve the years of our students," Lake said. "Talking to (students) a couple months into their senior year, they're all ready to go. They're sick of it. We need things to keep seniors interested, to keep them in school and to keep them wanting to come to school (with) a reason to be here."

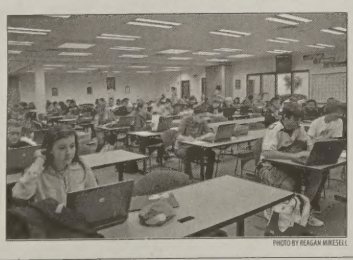

PHOTO BY REAGAN MIKESELL

Freshmen seminar students work diligently in the freshmen academy, a building that could be used for a senior academy in the near future.

the SPARTANA STAFF & EDITORIAL POLICY 2013-2014

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The Spartana is a bi-weekly production of Student Publications: Newspaper at Homestead High School. Its purpose is to enlighten, educate, and entertain. The Spartana has, and may continue to, operate as a limited open forum for the free exchange of ideas.

Staff members support the First Amendment in its entirety and oppose censorship in any form. The content of the paper is determined by the student staff. In cases of potentially controversial material, the Editorial Board will meet to decide the content of the newspaper. The staff will be assisted by the adviser in areas of professional ethics and legalities.

Material that is libelous or obscene as defined by Fort Wayne Newspapers or could cause a substantial and material disruption of the school day as defined by the Supreme Court will not be printed.

Southwest Allen County corporation encourages vigorous treatment of a wide range of subject matter, including controversial issues, and student journalists are free to report and to editorialize on events, ideas, and issues in their high school, community, nation, and world according to Policy Number 4150.

Public input will be accepted from the Homestead community in the form of letters to the editor. Letters must follow standards concerning libel or obscenity. Those that could cause a substantial and material disruption to the school day will not be printed. Letters can be e-mailed to The Spartana at thespartana@gmail.com

▶SADD CONTINUED FROM 1

Monday, red shirts on Tuesday, red bows and ties on Wednesday, red shoes and socks on Thursday and a crazy combination of everything red on Friday.

"It is increasing in what many believe to be a national or even global epidemic of students, who even starting at younger ages, get into a lifestyle that encompasses some form of drugs and alcohol," Merkling said. "There are numerous studies that show not just the social aspect but especially the biological aspect of what can happen to you, especially starting at younger ages like high school students, and how that can impede your development and mental capacities, not to mention it is against the law."

Students showed support throughout the week for the movement toward a drug-free lifestyle.

"I just don't think people should have to take something to find happiness," Jack Render (12) said. "We have the capability to make this life good without having to take drugs."

In addition to Red Ribbon Week, SADD focuses on encouraging students to have fun in a positive environment. The annual 3-on-3 basketball tournament will be in December.

"Our next event is our 3 v. 3 basketball tournament on Dec. 6 at the YMCA where we provide, at least for one evening, a place where we can show students that they can have a really good time without doing drugs or (drinking) alcohol," Merkling said.

All of SADD's events focus on the promotion of positive decision making skills while still having a good time.

"I think (Red Ribbon Week) is an important event for Homestead because it spreads awareness for a great cause," Christina Jesse (11) said. "Administration takes precautions to eliminate drugs on campus through drug tests and the use of drug dogs; however, I feel when students are given the opportunity to speak for themselves, the issue becomes more about the lives of the students rather than the possession of illegal substances."

Red Ribbon week is a visual representation of students standing up against drug and alcohol abuse.

"We wanted to encourage specifically the Homestead student body to stand up and support the movement against drugs, to become the most successful and most productive person you can be," Merkling said.

▶80,000

deaths attributable to excess alcohol consumption each year.

SOURCE: WWW.CDC.GOV

LEFT AND WRITE: Government shuts down for 16 days

Gridlock not centered only around Obamacare

By Colby Shoup
Writer

This might just be me, but it seems like if I had a job and I refused to go to it and stopped a lot of people who needed the work from working all because I was a sore loser, I would probably be fired.

Maybe I just live in a fantasy world where people still use common sense, because when the Republican House of Congress did exactly this in the recently ended government shutdown they were paid their full salaries, despite the fact that many government workers, such as park rangers, had to go without pay for sixteen days.

Conservatives will probably tell you that they shut down the government to stop the "horrid abomination of biblical proportions that is Obamacare," but I have a different theory.

Although the Republican Party has been against Obamacare since it was first proposed in 2009, what they were really worried about was being beaten out by a Democrat.

Thanks to the extremist beliefs of its current leader John Boehner, the Republican party is no longer concerned with helping people. All that it wants to do is make sure that President Obama is not able to exercise the powers given to him fair and square by the American people in the last two elections.

In the face of a growing liberal population, the Republicans are trying to stay in power as long as they can by challenging everything that the President does. The shutdown was merely an attempt to gain leverage for the Republican Party; a means for it to attempt to regain control of the country and force its ideals onto the American people.

This desperate grab for power is pathetic enough, but it is even more pathetic when you consider that Republicans thought it was worth risking a huge, potentially fatal, hit to the American economy (something that they claim to constantly be trying to fix) as well as putting thousands of government employees out of work for an indefinite amount of time.

The days of the shutdown must have been terrifying for the lower-ranking government employees because they had no idea when they would start getting paid again, and not all of them are as wealthy as the House of Congress members are, so many of them probably needed a steady, reliable paycheck in order to maintain daily life.

On top of this, the Republicans' attempt to hold on to their power also shut down government sponsored research organizations, such as N.A.S.A., which will be returning to work far behind schedule. In other words, the government shutdown could have prevented scientific breakthroughs from being made.

All in all, the government shutdown was unnecessary and it showed many skeptics what a part of them always knew deep down was true: Republicans are not politicians anymore. They are whiny little kids who throw hissy fits when they do not get what they want. The only difference is that when these guys throw a fit, the whole nation has to suffer from it and not just the poor parents of the spoiled child.

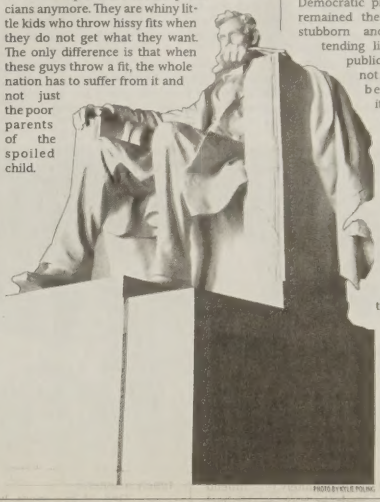


PHOTO BY KYLIE POLING

Health care bill lacks balance, causes cessation

By Robert McCoy
Writer

Both political parties, Republican and Democrat, refused to collaborate during the government shutdown and it was devastating to watch as turmoil once again divided the country. The Republican Party stated its demands offering an ultimatum to either defund the Affordable Care Act, dubbed Obamacare, or keep the government in a deadlock.

Meanwhile, the Democratic platform remained the same: stubborn and pretending like Republicans do not matter because it has different views. With less than 90 days left until the next Continuing Resolution needs to be passed, heated debate will once again be the hot topic in America. The government shutdown presented the true colors of both political parties.

> "Although, in theory, it is great to offer those stricken with poverty with affordable care, the bill crosses the line when it imposes hefty taxes and fines on those who do not go along with it."
>
> **ROBERT MCCOY**

The biggest issue with this national conundrum was the Democrat's demands. It continually stated that it would not compromise on the issue. On top of that, the president said he would not approve of any bill that defunded Obamacare. The continuous onslaught of vicious attacks the Democratic Party spewed out against Republican Senators Ted Cruz, Mike Lee and Rand Paul, calling them ignorant and destructive, is by no means any way to promote a cause. The shutdown displayed how the Democratic Party intends to run its platforms in the future.

There is a reason nearly 50% of Americans oppose Obamacare and all of its potentially damaging effects on the country, according to a recent Gallup Poll. Health care laws have always been decided by state governments; this has worked for decades, but for some reason President Obama and his party stated that now health care must become a national issue, no matter the cost.

Although, in theory, it is great to offer those stricken with poverty with affordable care, the bill crosses the line when it imposes hefty taxes and fines on those who do not go along with it. This creates a major problem. Examples of heavily increased deductibles are sprouting, such as in New Jersey, where couples of at least 60 years of age will have to pay nearly $14,000 for their medical plans, according to nj.com, a news conglomerate of New Jersey publications. They will have to pay even more if they want the same doctor. This is ironic, because "if you like your health plan, you will be able to keep your health plan," said Obama back in 2009. This is not true. Millions of Americans, including the 67% eligible, are being forced into new plans under new networks. The Affordable Care Act is an abomination in this country, and either needs to be repealed or rewritten in order to avert economic influence.

The Democratic Party cried out, refusing to let the law be defunded. The Republican party originally stood strong and proud, but eventually folded like a lawn chair, showing its internal divide between the young and old Republicans. Now, they have no leverage to get the law repealed, and are back at step one. Republicans stated its demands, and the Democratic Party refused to cooperate, leaving the blame up for debate.

Balanced calendar schedule better alternative

Despite shortened summer break, year-round school proven to stimulate student effort, performance

By Kylie Poling
Opinion Editor

Summer break is when students can go out and forget about school for ten weeks of bliss. However, during this time, most students forget what they have learned in the previous school year. If on a balanced schedule, this would no longer be an issue.

Given the displeasure students often feel towards year-round school, a balanced schedule seems to be an option that would appease both students and their academically-experienced elders.

One option would be to implement a two-week break at the end of every quarter. Another option would be to receive a one month break after every three months of school. This specific schedule allows for a four-week break during the respective months of December and April, and for a five-week summer break in August. This schedule is the one used at Spul'u'kwuks Elementary in Richmond, BC, Canada, according to the Vancouver Board of Education.

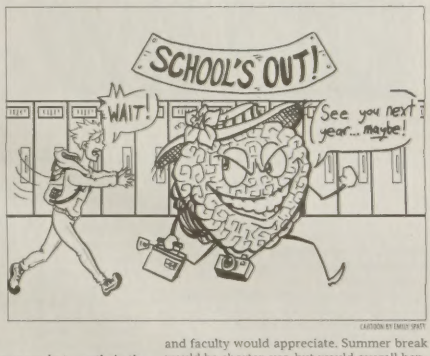
Evening out the number of breaks during the year would decrease the likelihood of students forgetting information; thus, the need for teachers to spend the first quarter of the school year reviewing material from the previous year is negated. This allows teachers to implement more information in their lessons plans, better preparing students for all of the standardized testing that occurs during the fall. Retaining information on a more long-term basis improves test scores and provides a better understanding of the materials presented.

Most parents would be concerned as to what to do with younger children that are not able to care for themselves during the allotted breaks. This can be remedied by schools implementing a "booster camp" as they are pegged, or simply a day camp for students. Teachers that work these camps could be offered additional pay for their efforts.

Scattered breaks also allow families the opportunity to travel more. Travelling during a traditional school year can normally only occur during winter break or spring break, unless a student is missing school. A balanced schedule would eliminate absences that are caused by this, improving student attendance and making students more willing to return to school.

Implementing a balanced schedule would benefit the student body in many ways, but mostly in the fact that sometimes students and teachers just lack time for rest.

School can seem long and tedious, but frequent breaks allow for periods of rejuvenation and relaxation, something that students and faculty would appreciate. Summer break would be shorter, yes, but would overall benefit the entire student body. Doing this would make students more willing to learn, something that, above all,w should be sought at all costs, and in this case, can be done by balancing the school calendar.



CARTOON BY EMILY SPATT

The Ed Board

Priscilla Lin
William Ngo
Allie Nelson
Haiden Steingass
Jessica Tebben
Katie Dunlap
Kylie Poling
Megan Cater

{The Bottom Line} *The transition to a year-round calendar would diminish the effects of extended breaks from learning and would reduce the stress students and teachers experience as workloads increase.*

twitter take

The Spartana attempts to capture the most impulsive responses on Twitter.

Question: "If you were in a scary movie, where would you hide?"

@Ormswaggle_13 - Logan Ormsby (11) ▶ "Anywhere but under the bed."

@nickvanburk - Nick Van Burk (12) ▶ "Behind @KyleMohsenzadeh."

@KelseyHerber - Kelsey Herber (9) ▶ "The kitchen. There's food there."

@BabyBerghoff - Sarah Berghoff (12) ▶ "Super Kroger. Nothing bad can happen at Super Kroger."

@hamilfun - Matt Hamilton (11) ▶ "Behind Drake White's ego."

@nataliegibble - Natalie Gibble (12) ▶ "Not in the closet."

Grades inaccurately reflect ability

Students avoid non-weighted classes to maintain desired academic results

By Katie Maher
Writer

Both students and parents alike stress about grades; grades reflect how well a student masters classroom material. However, it is sometimes mistakenly perceived grades show how much effort is put into a class and reveal a student's merit. This is not always the case. Due to this, grades cannot always accurately represent a student and his or her academic achievements.

For example, students studying in an honors or Advanced Placement (AP) course will have to learn at a faster pace than they would in a non-honors or AP class, and they may find it harder to maintain an A in the class.

Of course, it is always a goal for a student to earn an A, but earning a B in an honors or AP course does not mean the student is not trying hard enough or should not be in the higher level class.

Usually students that choose to take on a challenging course want to test themselves, and the harder material will introduce the students to the type of work they will do in college and beyond.

Students that earn a B in challenging classes should not be scolded for their class percentage, but congratulated for their efforts. Colleges will recognize the B in AP word history just as much as an A in regular world history, and will appreciate that the student tried to challenge his or herself.

It is also important to remember that school today is considerably more demanding than school 30 years ago; a B today would have been an A a few decades ago. We have discovered more about our ever-changing world at an extremely fast pace, and today's generation is expected to absorb what has been discovered recently, along with everything from the past.

> "Grades do not precisely measure the student's determination, character or intelligence even, but rather how well the student was able to learn exactly what he or she needed to know (...)"
>
> **KATIE MAHER**

While this is not a new concept, it is a demanding one, and it can dominate a student's entire life.

Grades do not precisely measure the student's determination, character or intelligence even, but rather how well the student was able to learn exactly what he or she needed to know to succeed in the class.

Different teachers have separate teaching methods. A student might run into a situation where they have an A in a class and find themselves to be a good match with a certain teacher, but when placed with a different teacher the following semester, they score an A-, even if the same amount of effort was put in as the first semester.

The teacher should be depended on for teaching students with different learning styles just as much as students are expected to be knowledgeable of the class material.

Of course, it is always important for a student to try their hardest; good grades need to be earned. However, the general misconception stating one with a below-A average is not motivated enough needs to be recognized, and the work of students that really do try their hardest deserves to be appreciated as much as it would if it were of any other student.

PHOTO BY MEGAN BUTLER

Outlet created for those 'dealing with a lot'

Fellowship of Christian Athletes provides ministry, promotes spiritual growth among students

BY WILLIAM NGO
Executive Editor

Student-led and faith-driven, Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) closes out negativity and opens up a chance for athletes to explore their beliefs and grow spiritually. The weekly meetings offer a secure, caring environment as friendships begin to form, outlasting any championship win.

The school's comforting club gathers in the cafeteria annex every Wednesday, welcoming the entire student body: Christian or non-Christian, athlete or non-athlete.

Erin Carlstrom (11) joined FCA during her freshman year and continued to come back for peer encouragement. Now setting examples as a club leader, she participates to hear messages about how to live out faith in everyday life. She discovered students share a common bond, experiencing and struggling with difficult life situations.

"(FCA) is a place for students to belong," Carlstrom said. "There are some kids out there that put on a smile everyday but are truly dealing with a lot on the inside."

The sports ministry serves as a calming break amidst her cross country and school schedules. The organization provides the opportunity for students to connect with those they would not have met otherwise, according to Carlstrom.

Like Carlstrom, Hunter Terrell (9) took interest in the club for building his faith while socializing with fellow athletes.

"Through FCA, I have learned that I have to take the initiative in seeking out God and that God doesn't perform works for my own benefit," Terrell said. "He has a bigger plan for me."

Terrell tries to maintain a positive and fun influence for his friends, and while on the football field and basketball court, he strives to encourage all of his teammates.

Attracting 45 students on average per week, the organization keeps a large, dedicated following. Despite popular beliefs, the FCA strays away from using force and negative peer pressure to gain club membership, according to Terrell.

Campus Life director and adult FCA volunteer, Brian Biedenbach, first became aware of the club during his own college years as an athlete at University of Indianapolis. Ever since his graduation, he had been searching for a similar club, eventually finding the sports ministry at the school.

Campus Life, another student club at school, and FCA formed a great partnership and collaboration as they reached out to the athletic crowd, according to Biedenbach.

"It's just been encouraging to see the boldness and the courage of students that are willing to share what they believe in ways that aren't confrontational and aren't offensive," Biedenbach said. "That's challenged me and pushed me in my faith to look at what I'm doing with my peers."

PHOTO BY LEAH VALENTINE

FCA members gather in cafetieria annex and listen to student and adult speakers to begin the meeting.

Before athletes' games and competitions, FCA members have prayed, hoping to give their fellow athletes and peers the strength to push through in times of discouragement and strain.

"Personally, I just think prayer (before games) is more about our own attitude," Biedenbach said. "I don't believe in any way that prayer influences the outcome, but I do believe it can influence the attitude of the athletes that are participating."

As the year progresses, the club's leaders plan to schedule more outside activities such as the annual capture the flag event and a new service project.

"I see FCA continuing to grow and developing more leaders," Carlstrom said. "I hope students continue to come and feel welcome and feel like they (...) can grow in friendships and in faith."

PHOTO BY LEAH VALENTINE

Acoustic Club attendees, from left, Jason Wilson, Grace Minnick (11) and Cara Allen (9) harmonize the sounds of their guitars and voices as they get comfortable with performing a favorite song together.

Acoustic club strives to gain importance, gather participants to improve overall musical sound

BY AWBREI VACHON
Writer

The school offers a lot of clubs to students of different interests: Art Club, Chess Club, Key Club, French Club and Spanish Club, among others.

One in particular, Acoustic Club, supports young musicians by allowing them to get together and play their hearts out.

Founders Howard Jankowski, former AP Literature teacher and avid guitarist, and Stephen Clough, who also taught AP Literature and plays guitar, figured a club designated for students looking to explore the world of music would be a tremendous idea. Thus, the Acoustic Club was born.

"Mr. Jankowski and Mr. Clough thought they could make a place where kids could come and share music and collaborate," Grace Minnick (11), club member, said.

"(They) both played guitar a lot and just really liked music."

Unfortunately, Jankowski and Clough have both retired from the program, which left students like Minnick scrambling to find a way to keep the tradition up on its feet.

"Grace was looking for somebody to (keep the Acoustic Club) going," Jason Wilson, guidance counselor, said. "And she found (Chris) Campbell and me."

Campbell and Wilson, sponsors and supervisors of the club for the past two years, were more than happy to oblige, and they knew they would enjoy spending time in Campbell's classroom with the students as they rock out to all of their favorite songs.

"It's not hard to stay after school on a Wednesday and do this sort of thing because I like music; I love playing music and I like the (students) who come to (Acoustic Club)," Wilson said.

Meeting every other week, the club ensures that the students are able to relax and enjoy their hobby with people who love music just as much as they do.

"We usually sit in a big circle and go around and everybody will play a song and kind of perform for everybody and share what they've been working on," Minnick said. "(It's nice to) have a stress-free break from the craziness (during the school day)."

> "We usually sit in a big circle and go around and everybody will play a song and kind of perform for everybody and share what they've been working on (It's nice to) have a stress-free break from the craziness (during the school day)."
>
> **GRACE MINNICK (11)**
> *Acoustic Club Member*

Of course, the majority of students who first join Acoustic Club tend to feel some anxiety and often have to develop the courage to perform in front of their peers.

"I don't know what it is about music that intimidates people," Wilson said.

Regardless, the intimidation is there, and a good number of individuals have a hard time getting over the shyness.

"When I first started coming as a freshman, I didn't really have any confidence in my own acoustic music," Minnick said. "(But) going to Acoustic Club has encouraged me."

Cara Allen (9), a new member of the club, can agree with this, and admits that attending the meetings has helped her and others come out of their shells.

"You watch the people who always play and you listen to them and you just gain more and more confidence," Allen said.

One of the biggest prerequisites for the being a musician is the ability to develop confidence and stage presence, and Acoustic Club is helping students get there.

However, not all attendees need to know how to play the guitar; students who enjoy just listening to music or who enjoy singing are also welcome.

With an such eclectic group of students, Acoustic Club never fails to entertain both performers and onlookers who simply come to listen.

"It's really fun to know that after a really stressful day at school, I can come to an environment that's full of people who love music like I do," Minnick said.

SAT preparations dominate student schedules

Academic pressure triggered by approaching standardized tests diminished by increased studying

BY MALLORY MCCAULEY
Writer

As students begin to enter their junior and senior years, there is one goal mounting their priority list: studying for and scoring well on the SAT.

The SAT is one of the most important tests students can take throughout their high school careers. The results of this standardized test can essentially dictate their future.

Around this time of year, as scheduled SAT testing time slots approach, students begin to do all they can to prepare for this test. Whether that be entering a class for a whole semester to help them prepare, creating a study group with their peers or studying independently, one thing is for sure, students are studying; however, maybe not as many as are studying as much as they should be.

"(Not many people study) because they don't understand the importance of (the SAT) and underestimate the difficulty of the test," Arden Sidel (10) said.

Some students are even putting their studying above their otherwise planned weekend activities.

Erin Carlstrom (11), Maddy Kline (11) and Olivia Zimmerman (11) coined their own term, "SAT Saturdays," for the study group they created dedicated to preparing for the test. Oftentimes, working in groups of peers can be most beneficial. The students can thrive off each other's knowledge and grow in areas which the others may be stronger in.

"(Kline, Zimmerman and I have) been talking a lot about studying for the SAT and what the best way to approach the test is," Carlstrom said. "We decided it would be great to get together and study together so we can share our different ideas and techniques."

As the SAT creeps closer, the infamous and monstrous College Board SAT prep books can be seen lying about a student's bedroom. These are the most commonly used tools to help students become exposed to the types of questions on the SAT. College Board SAT books often hold a higher advantage over other SAT prep books because the same people who write the SAT write the prep book as well.

"I got the (College Board SAT prep book) because I knew I needed to start preparing for the SAT and it has a lot of practice test which could help a lot," Blake Bowser (11) said.

What most students' study methods have in common are the practice tests. The best way to prepare for the test, especially the SAT, is to take a similar version. This helps students become exposed to the exact type of questions being asked, the time constraint and the correct answers.

As for the long-term approach, many students entering their sophomore or junior years signed up to take the semester-long etymology class. Etymology is a class offered by the school that is completely dedicated to SAT preparation. The main focus of the class is to build a vocabulary, a necessary set of knowledge to score high on the reading portion of the SAT.

> **11**
> hours are dedicated by the average student to SAT prep.
>
> SOURCE: PBS.ORG

The class works with College Board SAT books and focuses on the reading and writing portions of the test all semester long.

The SAT isn't like any other high school test students take during their high school careers. It is four hours long and is said to have trick questions, which are questions in which the answer is not straightforward. In saying this, studying is beneficial to all SAT-takers.

"Before studying, I had no clue what (the SAT) was going to be like, but after I took the test, I was glad to have studied," Fahad Hasnain (11) said. "Taking practice tests and studying as hard as I could helped me be confident in getting a high score (on the test)."

Internal family disputes allow stereotypes of family hierarchy to prevail

As the oldest child and the self-proclaimed know-it-all of my family of five, I have come to the conclusion that I fall near the top of the family hierarchy.

This hierarchy, of course, is one that I've made up simply from personal experience. I have a younger brother and a younger sister, and like many other siblings in rivalries, we fight about who has it worst, who has it best and, most importantly, who our parents love more.

Of course, my so-called hierarchy is not much of a hierarchy, but rather a division with an equal number of pros and cons in each category: oldest, middle and youngest. The hierarchy part only comes into play when we each place ourselves on top.

JESS SAYIN'

BY JESSICA TEBBEN
Life Editor

I often struggle when trying to figure out whether being the oldest child is the best position or the worst. Weighing the pros and cons, I've realized that it's equally good and bad.

If you're an oldest child like I am, you will understand when I say that all of the responsibility falls on you. You need to be a stable role model for your siblings to look up to. You also have to experience everything first. You have no one to look up to other than your parents who aren't much help since they were teenagers a few decades ago and probably forget what it's like. You also become the designated chauffeur as soon as you get your license.

On the other hand, the immensely better hand, you get to drive first. You get to start making money first. Sometimes, you even have the opportunity to play parent when you are put in charge. Perhaps the most important pro, however, is the fact that you almost never get hand-me-downs because you never have anyone with clothes to hand down to you.

Even though you may not realize it, your parents probably trust you the most, too. Not necessarily because you are reliable, but because you're the most mature. You are the oldest, after all.

According to my brother, there are no pros to being the middle child, but I have to disagree. Being sandwiched between two strong personalities gives middle kids the opportunity to get away with things that the oldest and youngest might not be able to get away with. In fact, I think parents seem to favor the kids in the middle the most because they generally don't have to worry about them getting into too much trouble.

Also according to my brother, the cons of being the middle child include parental neglect, which is not true in our family, and the lack of receiving "new and cool stuff", which can be debunked by the amount of gaming consoles found in his bedroom.

Generally, the middle child has one superpower that the youngest and oldest children do not have: the ability to instigate a fight without so much as getting a dirty look. The opposite side of the argument gets in trouble, and the middle kid escapes unscathed and ungrounded.

Finally, the infamous youngest child arrives at the scene with a hot temper and a bad reputation. Most of the time, my sister lives up to this rebellious reputation. She is selfish, spoiled and immensely disrespectful more than she is not. But sometimes she can be fun.

However, youngest children do not act to such extremes as my sister is an extreme example. From personal experience, the youngest is generally the most outgoing and can manipulate adults more easily than the oldest and middle children. More times than not, the youngest child can get their way.

Contradicting their sometimes obnoxious demeanor, the youngest children are naïve and outspoken, believing that the whole world is against them. From what I've seen from my sister, the younger you are, the more often you get grounded. My sister being grounded from her iPod all the time, for her, is only one of the many cons of being the last born.

However, my sister and most of the kids who only have older siblings always have good intentions and aren't always as evil and spoiled as they seem.

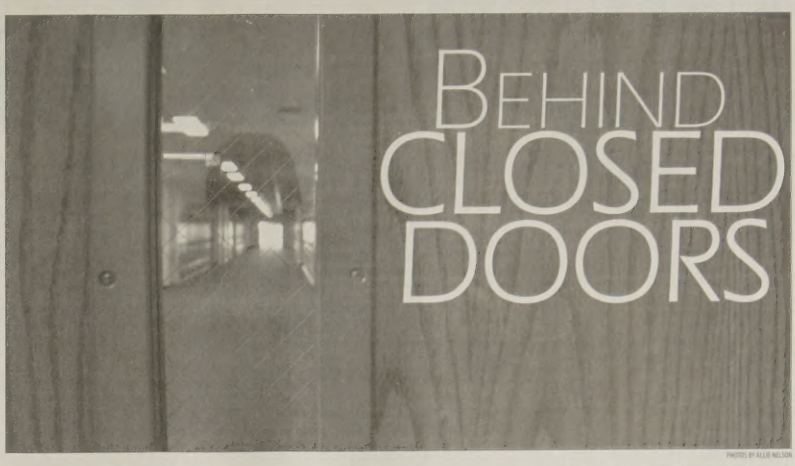
Of course, all of these generalizations are observations that I have made from personal experience. There are always exceptions. An oldest child may be the most rowdy, while the middle child is spoiled and the youngest child is laid back. Or there might not even be a middle child. Or there might be more than one middle child.

Basically, the hierarchy that fits your family all depends on the structure. My family seems to be typical, but that's only because I see my insane siblings every day. But each sibling has their own quirks and vices that make your family unique.

Really, no matter how you arrange yourselves, you and your siblings are always going to fight over who has the least privileges, who has the most pairs of shoes and who can get to the highest level on Candy Crush Saga. And when you get older, none of this competition is going to really matter, and the hierarchy suddenly becomes nothing but a straight line.

In the future, when your kids ask who you love the most, think about how you used to ask your parents the same things and smile because you have a hunch that your parents probably loved you the most.

All that really matters is who marries richest.



PHOTOS BY ALLIE NELSON

Despite flurry of rumors, Impact serves as academic alternative

BY SARAH CAMINO
Writer

Angela Greene, director and teacher of the impact program, assists student enrolled in an online course with class material. Students are divided to work together and individually.

After wandering the maze of hallways for several years, students may think they have discovered all of the school's shortcuts and secrets.

They've carefully calculated the walking time from the math hallway to upstairs, or from the band room to the biology labs. They have scoped out each route and know which ones are busy during the lunch block.

Although navigating throngs of students in twenty pound backpacks has become second nature, the south wing of the Freshman Academy, which houses the facilities for Impact High School, remains unexplored and largely misunderstood by the student body.

Previously located in the old YMCA, Impact moved when the freshman academy was opened, currently sharing space with the band and show choir storage rooms.

However, the enigma of the key-card-access-only doors have spawned a veritable hailstorm of rumors which circulate among the freshman class in particular. Students with a taste for the drama would be as happy to believe that the wings are haunted as they are to speculate on why the hallways are inaccessible, despite the fact that every classroom in the school is now required to remain locked at all times.

"One of my friends had a brother who went through Impact, so I heard a lot about it and what it was," Jordan Amidon (10) said.

Naturally, the locked wings attract attention as bright-eyed and ingenuous students try to catch a glimpse of the carpeted hallways beyond the doors. The rest of the school's linoleum seems lackluster in comparison to the unknown.

Urban legends have arisen and are passed to each successive class; however, these speculations entirely misconstrue the purpose of that section of the school.

"I've heard plenty of stories," Lane Harris (10) said. "Rumors that it was simply part of the previous middle school - extra space you could say. I've also heard that it's used for summer school and for teacher education classes."

In fact, Impact High School offers an alternative education for students whose personal situations put them at risk for leaving high school without having completed the coursework necessary for a diploma.

The coursework and services provided for students are largely determined on an individual basis, while a work release program helps customize students' education based on their career aspirations.

"Students can earn 3 credits for the work study program, two for working and one for the classroom portion," Impact job coach Laurie Behrendson said.

Impact's curriculum has also benefited from the school's laptops as Apex, an online curriculum from which students can earn credits, has been introduced.

"I didn't actually know what (Impact was) until this year, but I knew it had to be practical," Amidon said. "I wish the teachers would talk about it more though and let us know exactly why part of our school is locked up."

Certainly it is the case with Impact High School that locked doors and limited access does not mean limited potential.

"I love teaching the careers curriculum because we talk a lot about real-world skills like interviewing, budgeting and job searching," Behrendson said. "I think when you're a junior or a senior you're really thinking about your next step, and my students are really motivated to learn. There's a real interest here."

Theaters lack seasonal horror films

Scarce supply of scary movies contrasts this fall from those of previous years

BY COLBY SHOUP
Writer

Since the first horror film, a silent film called "The House of the Devil" (1896) was released, young moviegoers have been in love with being horrified by cinema. Because of this admiration, many teenagers have created a tradition of seeing as many horror films as possible during the month of October. This year, however, the major film studios decided to release just about all of their major horror films in July, August and September, releasing only one offering from the genre in October: Kimberly Pierce's poorly reviewed remake of the beloved horror classic "Carrie".

In a movie-going culture used to getting a "Paranormal Activity" movie, a "Final Destination" movie and at least two slasher movies every October, this October has been an anomaly and film fans everywhere are trying to figure out why this year was so different.

"Production companies want to make sure that there aren't two movies with the same premise that attract the same type of audience going head-to-head on the same weekend," Bailey Houser (12) said. "That could possibly pull the audience in half and greatly affect the revenues of both movies."

If Houser's theory is correct and films like "Insidious Chapter 2" and "The Conjuring" were released early to avoid competition with "Carrie", then it appears that Paramount Studios, producers of the "Paranormal Activity" films, are following suit.

Instead of releasing the fifth installment of the popular horror franchise in October of this year, Paramount will be releasing the movie in January 2014, thus breaking a three-year-long streak of "Paranormal Activity" films released every October since 2010. Whether this is truly why studios have stopped releasing all of their horror films in October is yet to be seen, but that will not stop the film-loving community from speculating.

"(Horror movies give) you the sense of suspense that people do not get from their everyday lives."

BAILEY HOUSER (12)
Scary Movie Aficionado

"I think it really is to bring in a bigger audience and bring in more money," Caleb Smith (12) said. "(However), I think that if the writers and directors could just come up with something original and not just copy everything else, the movie might do better."

The facts that studios seem to be moving away from releasing new horror movies in October and the fact that "Carrie" received negative reviews are not stopping thrill seekers from indulging in the macabre world of the horror genre.

Thanks to "OnDemand" services provided by Comcast XFINITY and Verizon FiOS, video-streaming services such as Hulu and Netflix and the hit horror films from earlier in the year that are still playing in theaters, viewers are able to experience seminal horror films like "The Exorcist", and brand new films. Gabrielle Hollman (11), an employee of Carmike Cinemas, has seen this first hand on a regular basis at work all of this month.

"'The Conjuring' and 'Insidious' have by far been the most popular movies (with Carmike customers)," Hollman said. "We've had 'The Conjuring' for months and people still go to see it."

Even if these resources weren't available for the often rabid horror fan base to utilize, they would find other ways to enjoy horror films.

They are incredibly passionate about these movies and addicted to the unique adrenaline rush that they feel when watching them.

"The reactions received from a truly great horror movie leave you sunk in your seat with sweaty palms and clenching the arms of your chair," Houser said. "(Horror movies give) you the sense of suspense that people do not get from their everyday lives."

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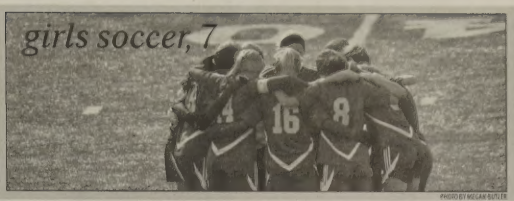


PHOTO BY MEGAN BUTLER

WINTER SPORTS PREVIEW

BOYS BASKETBALL

Just as the popular school sport, football, comes to an end, winter brings in the boys basketball season to take its place. The season will begin this November, and the bar is set high for each athlete.

"Basketball is an opportunity to play the game I love with a team that has become like family to me. I am looking forward to competing in conference, sectionals and possibly even state this season," Dana Batt (11) said.

In order to ensure a quality team which will make it to the championship games, players will begin tryouts early this month, which will consist of drills, scrimmaging and conditioning for approximately three days.

During these days, the coaches evaluate prudently in order to establish the greatest possible team roster for the varsity and junior varsity squads.

"Whatever my role is, I'm going to work hard and do whatever it takes to help this team win. It would be exciting to play at the varsity level because the games are much more important and there is an added element of playing in front of the amazing student section," Teddy Ray (11) said.

No matter what, it is evident the student section will have a big turnout once again at the basketball games.

The crowd's excitement and motivation will keep the varsity team going strong, as it had in years past.

"It definitely looks like we are going to have a fantastic team this year and our main goal, as always, is to come together as a team, and achieve the major wins," Luke Cooper (11) said.

> "Basketball is an opportunity to play the game I love with a team that has become like family to me. I am looking forward to competing in conference, sectionals and possibly even state this season."
>
> **DANA BATT (11)**
> *Basketball Player*

GIRLS BASKETBALL

The girls basketball team has already set high expectations for themselves. The team feels it has the potential to make a run for the state title and will work as hard as it needs to get there.

The athletes have made a noticeable effort in the offseason to prepare for this year.

As a result, the hard work has shown in the open gym practices and is predicted to reflect during season.

There are several underclassmen players, but the lack of seniority is not expected to bring them down.

"Last year we had an even younger team than we do this year, and we went 21-4." Savannah Buck (10) said.

The team may be young, but the girls have been playing together for a while, allowing players to familiarize themselves with the style and technique of fellow members.

Players expected to lead their team are Savannah Buck (10), Sydney Buck (12), Josie Fisher (11) and Grace German (11).

There are a few incoming freshman who will be eager to contribute to the talent level of the team.

Like any sport, the goal is to make it to state. More confident than most, the girls have been working hard on and off the court to make this a reality.

"We expect to have another strong season this year and also advance as far as we can in the tournament." Fisher said.

PHOTO BY REAGAN MIKESELL

Kathleen Landrigan (11) prepares to shoot the ball during a team practice.

WRESTLING

A drastic change has affected the wrestling team this year with the implementation of a new coach. With the season around the corner, things are getting started for the team.

"I don't really know (what the change will bring to the team)," Tim Eshcoff (12) said. "I'm excited; it will be cool to have a new coach in there teaching us new things. I think we will do well because we have some good guys coming back, so I think it will be a good season."

The wrestlers met the new coach for the first time on Oct. 24 and have since been attending informal practices.

"I'm excited to see where it goes," Chase Woosley (12) said. "He coached at Trine, which is where our previous head coach wrestled in college so you can only expect that good things can come."

Like many sports teams, there are preseason preparations. The unique dynamic of the sport relies heavily on memorization and physical fitness.

"Our previous head coach gave us a lifting program so I have been lifting weights and going to open mats and preseason practices and any sort of physical activity. I can to get in shape," Woosley said.

More specifically each individual athlete has been enduring training from a range of various teams and offseason sports.

"I've been going to a lot of club practices in the spring and over the summer. I have been hitting the gym and running cross country to keep me active since last season," Eshcoff said.

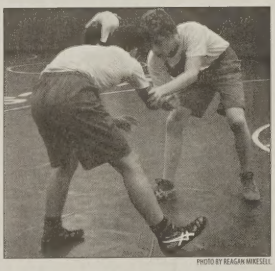


PHOTO BY REAGAN MIKESELL

Gavin McDonald (9) pairs off with a fellow wrestling team member during practice. The wrestling team has been engaging in early preparations on account of a new coach.

GYMNASTICS

The gymnastics team will begin in full swing at the end of the month with conditioning three days a week for two hours at a time.

"We have a grueling competition season early as we pack either meets in two and a half week," Ryan Gorndt, gymnastics coach said.

After tryouts on Nov. 25 and 26, the team will have its first competition against Bishop Dwenger on Dec. 21.

"We practice five days a week after tryouts are complete," Gorndt said.

Competition season runs into March, with the State meet looming at the end of March at Perry Meridian.

The far off date allows the gymnasts to strenuously work towards state throughout the season, gaining experience through practices and meets.

"I'm excited to see how much we can accomplish as a team this year, "Vanessa Berghoff (12), gymnast, said. "I'm not sure what to expect. Some girls are recovering from injuries but our incoming freshmen are very good."

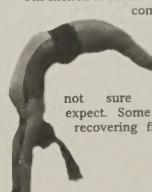


PHOTO BY MEGAN BUTLER

> "I like the team atmosphere. There is always someone to pick you up if you are not feeling well."
>
> **VANESSA BERGHOFF (12)**
> *Gymnast*

The team goes up against a large range of competitors including Concordia, Snider, Warsaw, Northrop, Huntington North and Carroll.

Most of the team's events are away; only four will be conducted at its home gym.

The group of athletes has a busy season ahead of itself and looks forward to the challenges the season will bring.

The team has a lot of hard work to do, preparing themselves both physically and mentally for competition season. While preparations for the upcoming year are vital, strong team bonds remain the constant staple.

"I like the team atmosphere. There is always someone to pick you up if you are not feeling well," Berghoff said.

GIRLS SWIMMING

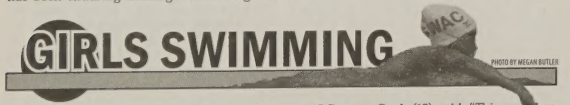


PHOTO BY MEGAN BUTLER

As a hard working team, girls swimming is ready for a season full of success. The majority of participants swim all year through a club, so their year has been busy and consistent with practice.

Swimming has been highlighted as one of the hardest working teams as the girls practice before and after school, along with workouts in and out of the pool.

The senior girls are motivated by their experience and have a lot of previous accomplishments under their belt.

They will strive to do their best in the last year of competition. The team has already bonded and has become extremely close.

This will help the girls encourage and cheer each other on when the competition portion of the season begins.

"I'm really motivated this year because I'll be swimming in college next year so I have a lot of bigger goals than I have had in the past," Reagan Cook (12) said. "This year has been a lot of fun being a senior, because I'm getting the opportunity to lead and be there for the underclassmen."

Each year, the swim team sends girls to state in hopes to win events.

Each participant who has been to state in the past is expecting to place at or better than her previous state competition.

"My goal is the win State and do the best I can my senior year." Caroline Weigand (12) said.

As the girls prepare for the season, they do workouts out of the pool to train their muscles.

Swimmers anticipated to anchor this year's success are Cook and Weigand, along with incoming member Megan Johnson (9).

"I think a lot of girls on the team will be surprised with how well everyone does at the end of the season because a lot of people are stepping up this year," Cook said.

> "I'm really motivated this year because I'll be swimming in college next year so I have a lot of bigger goals than I have had in the past."
>
> **REAGAN COOK (12)**
> *Swimmer*

BOYS SWIMMING

Swimming is a sport which is practiced all year round for most competitors. The long hours of practice have prepared the swimmers for the upcoming season.

"We have been training for about 20 hours a week, twice a day every Monday, Wednesday and Friday," Ben Stone (12) said. "We also train once a day on Tuesdays and Thursdays."

With the beginning of the new season, there have been some changes on how the team has prepared for the upcoming competition.

"We have stepped up training a little bit this year after a not so good season last year," Cameron Frank (10) said. "We started the season by going harder."

Starting a clean slate, the boys' positions begin to fall into place as they look to set a strong foundation for the entire season.

"The team looks good," Frank said. "We've got some really good seniors this year than they did last year, and they have been really great leaders. We have a lot of sophomores who have stepped up, and we had a really great freshman class come in."

On top of the basic training, the swimmers have been dealt with preseason rankings to evaluate each individual's potential and placement on the team.

After the team's first meet, the coaches now have a better idea of what the future will hold, and ultimately, the chances look promising.

"We are going to win conference and we are going to win sectionals," Stone said. "We have a pretty good chance of placing within the top eight at state just based off of pre-season rankings and how the team performed at our first meet."

PHOTO BY MEGAN BUTLER

Kurt Gutwein (11) performs a butterfly stroke during swim practice at Summit natatorium.

Lifelong dreams become reality with hard work

Along with my senior year has come a lot of reminiscence on my decisions as an adolescent. Though I don't have many regrets, to this day I think about how things would be different if I played a sport instead of being involved in dance.

This prolonged feeling promotes me to analyze one of my closest childhood friends and her success story as the school's basketball star.

I feel lucky enough to have played on Sydney Buck's elementary school basketball team, but clearly she has taken her talents to an extraordinary level. After this year's season, Buck will turn in her Spartan jersey for the last time and embark on a new athletic journey as a Butler University bulldog.

This kind of achievement is nothing less than justified. For Buck, her life as a basketball player was kick-started in kindergarten when a toy basketball hoop sparked her interest.

Her parents joined her in Y-ball shortly after where she learned the ropes and fell in love with the game. I remember being involved in the same basketball league when we were kids, and Buck was always the one to watch out for.

HAIDEN'S HIGHLIGHTS

BY HAIDEN STEINGASS
Sports Editor

Her aggressive, quick tendencies left our teammates envious, and ten-year-old me wished I could be even half as gifted as she was. As the beginning of middle school approached, I parted ways with the sport, whereas Buck persevered onto the middle school and high school teams.

"My best (basketball) memories include AAU games in the summers since middle school and the past three years of high school basketball here at Homestead. Winning sectionals and getting to the regional championship my freshman year was a great memory," Buck said.

To conclude these advantageous high school opportunities, the athlete has her mind set on one final goal: taking home a State Championship title at the end of the school's season.

"As a team, we have really high expectations for this season," Buck said. "We're returning everyone from last year, and we have a couple freshmen coming in that will contribute a lot this season. Our goal is to win state this year, and we definitely think it will happen."

Being granted with such a humble spirit, Buck never flashes her obvious talents to anyone, which led to a surprising announcement for anyone who does not follow the school's athletes.

After a long time coming, last year Buck was offered a full ride to Butler University to play on its basketball team.

The news spread instantly throughout the halls and on Twitter of our fellow classmate attending the Indianapolis college.

"Butler is a great school academically, and to be able to get an education there for free was an opportunity I couldn't pass up," Buck said. "I really like the campus down there, and it's the perfect distance from home for me. They play the same style of basketball that I'm used to and play best in, so it was a great fit for me athletically. Overall, I just felt it was the best college option for me over the other colleges that offered me."

Basketball has made an outstanding impact on every aspect of her life from the day she made her first shot into a four foot high net to the day she committed to Butler, according to Buck.

I feel as if I am one of many who would take a second to deliberate his or her childhood decisions after hearing Buck's remarkable story. This goes to show even as a kid, the things we do and love have the ability to completely alter our futures.

Personally, I frequently visit the days of basketball, softball and tennis practices in my mind speculating why I chose a different path. Regardless of my enduring questions, Buck found her calling, and someday so will you and I.

PHOTOS BY MEGAN BUTLER

Girls varsity soccer suffers devastating loss at semistate

BY ETHAN YDE
Writer

The girls soccer team advanced exceptionally far this season, with key victories in sectionals and regionals, which sent it straight to the semistate tournament.

"Our team has changed so much over the course of the season, and we had to learn how to play together with teamwork because that is when we are strongest," Morgan Cole (12) said.

The hard work throughout the season paid off, although the season came to a close this past Saturday when the team lost a well fought battle against Valparaiso. Nonetheless, the girls were still proud of every accomplishment leading up to it.

"We put a lot of time into practicing," Katie Metz, head coach, said. "We even practiced on turf in the mornings because regional and semistate are both on turf fields."

Obviously, as with any team, wins do not always come easy. The varsity team experienced many close games before making it to semistate.

One of the most exhilarating moments was the regional win because that was the goal Metz and every player had in mind during the season.

"Our most difficult game leading up to the regional win was definitely Carroll," Cole said. "They are almost equally matched with us and it tested us as a team to see if we had what we needed to make it to regionals."

When asked about this particular game, each player agreed Carroll and Valparaiso were the toughest games to overcome.

When the athletes defeated Carroll in the first round of regionals, it was a load off of the their back and also one of the most exciting moments of the year.

After exceeding the expectations of many, the team was relieved, but it certainly was not done yet.

The girls put in all they could in order to continue the season and made lasting memories on the field. Although it didn't last forever, the athletes were still happy with how it went as a whole.

After the game, social media was filled with recaps and emotional experiences from the conclusion of the season.

Tweets about how wonderful the season was but also melancholy tweets about the loss of the seniors next year filled the timeline. This truly goes to show how important the sport is to every player.

"We worked as a single unit to transition on the field and we came together both on and off the field," Hannah Miller (12) said.

Miller, Cole, and Ally Link (12) were the team captains this year, and the athletes all agree it will be tough to see their senior counterparts leave after graduation.

The bar is set high for the team because of these fantastic players, and it will be thrilling to watch the upcoming generation of players come around next year.

Even though the team did not come out of season undefeated or state champions, the year has been an unforgettable experience for the girls soccer team, and the successes will set a precedent for years to come.

Top: Ally Link (12) is comforted by Coach Katie Metz and fellow teammates after missing her penalty kick on Oct. 26 in South Bend, Ind. during the semistate semifinals match against Valparaiso. Bottom: Catie Flory (10) rushes down the turf field in attempt to score for the team.

THE CHARGING

SECTIONALS SEMIFINALS
Homestead 9
North Side 0

SECTIONALS FINALS
Homestead 4
Huntington North 0

REGIONALS SEMIFINALS
Homestead 1
Carroll 0

REGIONALS FINALS
Homestead 1
DeKalb 0

SEMISTATE SEMIFINALS
Homestead 1
Valparaiso 2

Team ends season against Carroll

Despite home court advantage, girls volleyball falls short at regionals

BY TESSA LUTZ
Social Media Manager

On the weekend of Oct. 26, the volleyball team competed in sectionals against Huntington North in a well matched game which resulted in a satisfying victory.

In the past, the team had never been able to advance to regionals or state, which left a strong desire for this year's group to persevere.

During the regular season the girls conquered Huntington North in an intense five game match. The last time volleyball won sectionals was in 2010 and 2011.

"We've got the team that can win the first regional game in school history and go on to semi state," Kent Mitchell, volleyball coach, said.

Huntington North is a known rival, and overcoming that school during the regular season and sectionals were major achievements for the team.

"It gives us confidence knowing that we can beat them," Cassidy Geller (11) said. "We realize that they have probably gotten better, because we have gotten a lot better over the season, so we need to anticipate what they are doing and then just play our hearts out."

The team had been preparing themselves for regionals, with the greater goal of making it to state in November. It had been working not only on its technical skills but also its mentality as a team.

"There is no quit in this team," Mitchell said. "We've been down this season a few times where a lot of teams would have quit, and they didn't; they kept the grind. They kept grinding away, and took it one point at a time. We have some really nice wins that the other coaches were probably upset about because we just kept coming at them when we could have easily given up."

With the hype of tournaments, the team felt a lot of emotions before its big game Saturday.

"I (was just) excited, I feel like we have a lot of really passionate players, Tatum Ellis (11) said. "If we're up, we are just so much higher than any other team because everyone wants it so bad. Then we've been working on focusing so hard all season, to keep that level of intensity throughout the whole match has been really important. We (weren't) just training for sectionals but for regionals, semi state and state. We are keeping it one game at a time but at the same time keeping in mind a larger goal."

With such passionate practices, the girls have learned over the season every minute counts.

"We really try to work hard in practice, and lifting each other up has been a really big thing too, on and off the court and to really stay together as a family," Geller said. "I think working as a family has really helped us achieve our goals and has helped us win."

The pressure to prove what the team predicted the entire season left anticipation and emotions at an apex for the year on Tuesday Oct. 29.

The team took on Carroll at home in regionals and lost in a four game match.

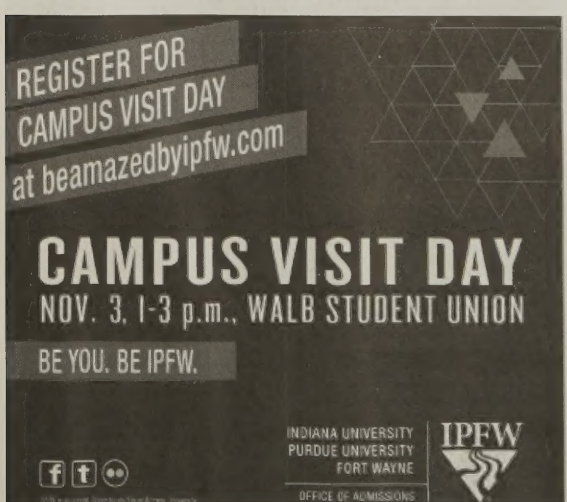
Although it started out strong, it was not able to defeat the opposing team thus concluding its season.

With such high stakes going into the game, the girls left the court with lingering sentiments.

"You're excited because you're in the tournament, and it's win or go home, so that's exciting," Mitchell said. "It's exciting because we know we have a really good team. You've built this relationship with a team, and we are a real family, and that's sad as the end of the season comes. You don't want it to end because of that, this team gets along really well as a family."

PHOTO BY REAGAN WIKSELL

Volleyball team members huddle and shout between points during the regionals game held in the school gym.



Death of the Family Dinner

By Allie Nelson
Executive Editor

If all bonds, those formed around a piece of furniture are most important. The dinner table is a meeting place, a habitual setting of rest and pleasant conversation, a spot families can retreat to after a grueling workday.

Now, the lonely table is no more of a dust collector than it is a reminder of irregular holiday meals gathered around it. Sitting elbow to elbow, small talk reaches a new high, and normally idle china takes its place between excessive amounts of silverware.

Suddenly, the formal events became the dining room's only attention. Extracurricular activities have replaced the daily dinners vanishing from modern society, the dinners which will not return until life slows down.

Athletics, academic pressures and full-time jobs have turned the typical evening schedule upside down. Competition to succeed in school and to be admitted into college leaves students no free time; when students are not at school they are completing schoolwork.

"The closest to a family dinner (my family has) will be my brother and I eating at the island doing homework or being on our phones," Ally Hembree (12), student and swimmer, said. "That's what it has evolved into. It makes zero sense during the week to have (a family dinner) because we would have to meet at like 9:00 at night."

Sad but true, the commonality has influenced the majority. Few would like to admit a sit-down meal with the entire family is not even a weekly occurrence. Parents, on average spend 38.5 minutes a week in an important conversation with their children, according to DinnerTrade.

"It's nice to sit down and calmly eat together, but it hasn't really happened in our family," Hembree said. "(People say) if you sit down with your kid at dinner they'll get better grades. It's nice to sit down and talk to your parents over a meal. It can be calming and almost therapeutic."

The countless arguments attempting to support or refute family dinners' correlation with better grades and above the influence decisions appear in almost every declaration in relation with the subject.

In reality, numbers alone should not change peoples' minds; the loss of anything which was at one time a tradition as widespread as this was is sad. Family dinners are not only beneficial from the outside but also nostalgic of times when life was simpler and families were more connected.

"It's not good," Chad Zolman, teacher and head football coach, said. "I think if you are not eating together, you kind of lose contact. You don't have a sense of how the other person's doing."

Although rare, a handful of American families have maintained the tradition. Siblings Matt Clay (11) and Abbie Clay (9) continue to gather with their nine brothers and sisters on a regular basis. With eleven children, family dinners have been a part of their routine for as long as they can remember.

"Every night (we eat) with our immediate family and then Sunday night (our extended family comes) over," Matt Clay said. "We usually start dinner at 6:00 and we start with prayers. My table is like an oval and each part of the oval has a different food."

Despite the chaos of people, the event is organized and the conversations which erupt reconnect the members of the family after a day of separation.

"(Times have changed) because of the busy schedules and because parents don't care about spending time with their children and neither do the children (she)," Abbie Clay said. "They just don't find it one of the most important things in life."

Students of families who deem the habit more important than activities outside the home acknowledge the fact their relationships would be radically different without family dinners.

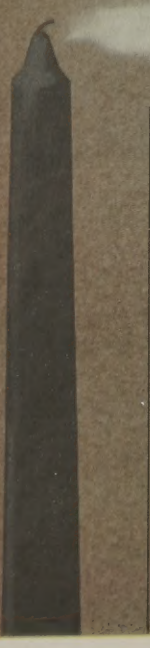
"Especially with the activities going on with band or tennis with everyone in our family eating at different times, (business) takes away from our family dinners but it also makes us want to strive for family dinners more," Annie Rumsey (11), student and band member, said. "Because they are not available as much, we make more of an effort to make them available. We go to extracurricular activities and know they take away time to spend with each other, but at the same time (the activities) serve as an incentive to have family dinners."

Although side effects of gathering nightly as a family are stressed in advertisements and articles supporting their return, these benefits are shallow and purely physical.

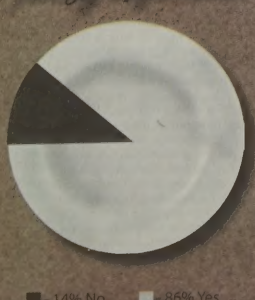
The bottom line is families should set aside this time to be a family and to stay in touch after a long day apart.

"Our family dinners aren't focused on dinner," Rumsey said. "They're focused on the conversations we're having and what we talk about and what we discuss is more than the idea of having a meal. It's the tradition of discussing our day and ourselves and how we act together. It's an important part of our lives and without it we wouldn't have a common resting place for us to regroup as a family."

Blown Away



Is eating dinner as a family important?



97% of students would like to eat dinner as a family in their adult lives.

82% of students prefer home cooked foods compared to fast foods.

Extracurricular Activities are the main factors preventing students from eating dinner with their families.

24% of students have family dinner five times per week. 14% of students do not have family dinners at all.

Four People on average eat during students' family dinners.

21-30 minutes is the estimated amount of time the average student family dinner lasts.

the SPARTANA

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NEWS Administrators discuss the hefty fine that the school received following an abundance of absences and tardies last school year. 1

OPINION In a digital age, music piracy poses a threat to the music industry as it becomes increasingly more popular among teenagers. 3

LIFE The student body recaps on yet another successful fall play after the drama program presented The Mouse That Roared. 5

SPORTS After falling short during the season of the 2012-13 school year, the girls basketball team has high hopes for the future. 7

FEATURE Students take part in the popular national No Shave November campaign in order to raise prostate cancer awareness. 8

Friday, November 22, 2013 | A 2009 Pacemaker Winner | Homestead High School's News Source Since 1969

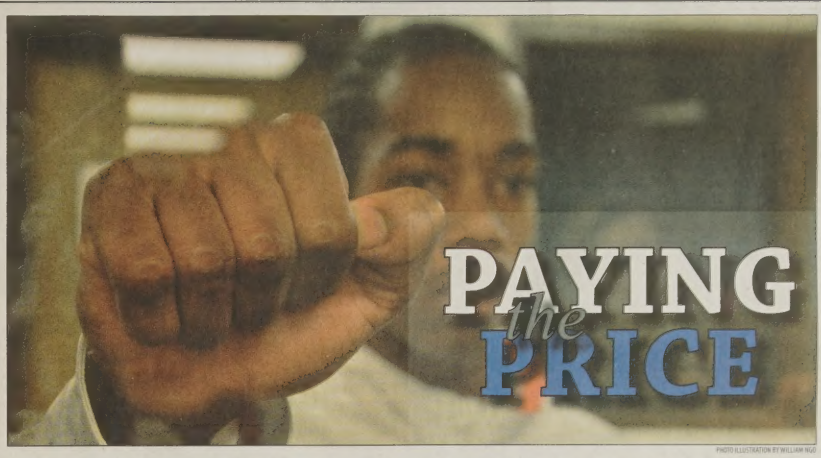

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY WILLIAM HUO

Jamal Bryant (10) knocks on the glass window of one of his classes attempting to enter the classroom after one of the many frequent and mandatory tardy sweeps.

School inflicts tardy sweep policy after being fined by state

By Ian McKenzie
Copy Editor

Lost in the translation between implementation and consequent grumbling around the school, the source of the new tardy and attendance rules has been unknown to many people. In the Friday video announcements on Nov. 1, principal Park Ginder addressed the driving source of all the divisive policy changes, revealing that the school was forced to take action to improve poor tardy and attendance numbers from the school last year.

"In order to address the need for fewer kids being tardy and, not necessarily tardy, but anything that would cause a student to have an ISS, OSS or detention, we were encouraged, negatively I guess, by being told we had to spend a certain amount of money to correct this problem," Ginder said. "So Mr. Zvers, our new dean, (was hired) as a direct result of these growing (attendance and tardy) numbers."

Along with staffing a new position specifically for the purpose of dealing with those discipline issues, the administration has gone ahead with additional, more cost-effective rules.

"The state didn't actually fine us, they just defined that we needed to spend a certain amount of money to correct this problem," Ginder said. "So we needed to find as many economical ways to make impact (as possible), so that's why the tardy sweeps and phone calls home (after three tardies) have increased."

Even with the knowledge of the mandatory impetus from the state and federal governments, there are still differing viewpoints in the teaching staff and student body as to the effectiveness of the new policies.

> "I'm aware that attendance is evaluated every year or is part of the school's evaluations every year, but I wasn't aware we were penalized."
>
> **BRIAN NICHOLSON**
> *Math teacher*

"I feel like the tardy sweeps are counterproductive because they take kids out of class, which is exactly what the administration is trying to avoid," Emily Herbert (12) said. "I feel like the things they are implementing now aren't really conducive to the students, even though they are for the students."

Among the ranks of teachers, Brian Nicholson, AP Statistics and geometry teacher, represents a view on the other side of the spectrum.

"I appreciate that (Ginder) is addressing attendance and I don't have a problem with anything at this point," Nicholson said. "He understands that there's an importance to being present in class. I think that is an important step to help teachers keep students in their seats."

A common thread in each person's viewpoint is that neither knew the origin of the oft-debated changes until the

▶ SEE 'TARDY SWEEP,' PAGE 2

District security grant awarded

By Hamna Qureshi
Writer

Southwest Allen County Schools (SACS) were recently given a $50,000 grant from the Secured School Safety Grant program to improve the security of schools in the SACS district. This grant will go towards improving school security equipment that will restrict access to schools within the district.

According to an article recently published in the Journal Gazette, the Secured School Safety Grant program is giving upwards of $9 million to Indiana schools.

While the district is receiving grants to improve security, the high school will not be benefitting from the money as much as other schools in the district because this school is already very secure.

According to assistant principal Jeff Kintz, the school already has many security measures in place.

"From a physical perspective, there are some upgrades. All the main entrances (such as) doors 26, 4 and 1 have a Sally ported entrance," Kintz said.

A Sally ported entrance is an entrance that has two sets of doors; visitors can enter through the first set of doors, but must go through the office to get access into the school. In the office, visitors can have their keys taken away and their IDs checked to ensure maximum safety in the school.

The staff at Homestead is also prepared

▶ SEE 'SECURITY,' PAGE 2

▶ 50000
thousand dollars in grant money awarded to Southwest Allen Country Schools in order to improve school security.

BRIEFS

SENIOR YEARBOOK PHOTOS
Any senior who wishes to have his/her picture printed in the yearbook must have their picture taken at Lifetouch Studios/Prestige by Dec. 6. Any student who does not have his/her photo taken by Prestige by this deadline will not be included in the 2013-14 school yearbook.

DRIVERS ED
The book portion of drivers ed classes are being held this winter. Students who wish to participate must be turning 15 before Jan. 27 in order to be eligible to participate. The class runs from Jan. 27 to March 3 with classes meeting several times per week. Each class meets from 6-8, and the cost is $125. Registration is to take place at 6:30 on the morning of Jan. 16 in the community room. Contact student services for any additional information.

PARENT NIGHT
Parents of students of the entering freshman class of 2018 are invited for a school visit at 6:30 on Jan. 15 in the freshman academy. This parent night will provide parents with information regarding the freshman academy, freshman scheduling, advanced placement and dual-credit courses and elective and extracurricular activities available.

CAP AND GOWN ORDER FORMS
Jostens will be in the cafeteria on Dec. 10 to collect all senior cap and gown order forms. All order forms should be placed on this date or before. If any student is in need of another order form, more can be found in student services.

COVENTRY AUTO WASH
Due to the unexpected closing of Coventry Auto Wash, those who have purchased car wash cards from athletes may bring the card to the Athletic Office in order to trade them in for two car washes from Mike's Car Wash.

NHS inducts largest class to date

Annual ceremony signifies beginning of new year for academic honor society

By Megan Cater
Copy Editor

The annual National Honors Society Induction ceremony was held on Nov. 13 in the auditorium. National Honor Society is a service organization that recognizes students for their academic ability in high school. Based upon their first two years as a high school student, a cumulative grade point average of a 10.0 and approval from teachers is necessary to be inducted into the society.

If NHS members fail to maintain their high grade point average or have an issue regarding their character, they can be dismissed from NHS.

Students are inducted during the fall semester of their junior year and are recognized again at the ceremony their senior year.

"I wanted to be a part of NHS because it is a prestigious club that could further my opportunities in life and connect me with well-accomplished peers," Brenden Spangler (11) said.

With 136 new inductees this year, two of whom were seniors, this was the largest inducted class so far for our NHS chapter.

Although the majority of the National Honor Society is inducted during their junior year, if students reach a 10.0 by the end of their junior year, they can be inducted as seniors.

The ceremony began with the recognition of the senior class NHS members. The seniors were announced and walked across the stage as a slideshow of each student's baby picture and current picture were shown.

Following this, the juniors were called up to be officially inducted. Along with the symbol of the club, the key, students were given a

▶ SEE 'NHS CEREMONY,' PAGE 2

PHOTO BY GABBY HOLLMAN

Newly inducted NHS members take part in the candlelight ceremony that took place at 7 on Nov. 13 in the gymnasium. The main candles used in the ceremony all represent different values that National Honor Society hold close. The light from the flames of the big candles are then spread across to individual student candles, representing the transfer of such values.

Marching band places third at state

Annual ceremony signifies beginning of new year for academic honor society

By Aparna Chintapalli
Writer

Performing at the ISSMA State Finals at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis, the Spartan Alliance Band proved, once again, in their 27th consecutive placement, their talent in juxtaposing music, uniform drills and an underlying theme within their performance. They placed third at the competition on Nov. 2, while competing against numerous high-performing schools, including Avon and Carmel.

The Homestead band conveyed the theme of "Night at the Circus," as over three hundred students worked collectively in order to create a memorable performance. "I was extremely proud of our band placing in the top three, and I think we had an amazing run that night," Jeremy Tatara (11), drum major, said. "It is definitely a show that will be remembered for years to come."

The band members maintained a strong commitment throughout the season by spending many hours on a daily basis, practicing vigorously. They began the season a few weeks before school started, cutting down their summer vacation and conditioning them into their routines.

Steve Barber and Brad Wadkins are in charge of directing the band.

"The expectations were the same every year going into the season, and we were glad to be able to place again at state," Steve Barber said.

▶ SEE 'MARCHING BAND,' PAGE 2

A DAY IN THE LIFE

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Visual Day 1:49 to 5 p.m.	Music Day 6 to 8 p.m.	Visual Day 1:49 to 5 p.m.	Music Day 6 to 8 p.m.	Visual Day 1:49 to 5 p.m.

▶NHS CEREMONY CONTINUED FROM 1

certificate and a candle. The traditional lighting of the candles and passing on of the flame symbolized the induction.

"Despite being seated by myself in my own row, I thoroughly enjoyed the ceremony," Spangler said. "The entertainment via Mr. Hill's humorous speeches and the process of being inducted into the NHS was an all-in-all great experience."

The National Honor Society candles symbolize different values important to the organization. The white candle symbolizes the NHS award, gold is scholarship, red is community service, purple is leadership and green is character.

"As a group, we are involved in the free tutoring program at Homestead and it's cool to see how we can help out our peers," Morgan Caudill (12) said. "I also enjoy volunteering within the community and helping at some of the school's events."

National Honor Society members must complete community service hours, the most notable being the the free tutoring program. Along with tutoring, NHS members kick-start Fine Arts Week with the NHS Coffeehouse which consists of coffee, music and art.

"We're always trying to expand our tutoring," Scott Hill, NHS advisor said. "I think there are many more people in the school who could use tutoring but just don't avail themselves of it. It's usually pretty helpful for them (...) It's nice to have a different perspective (from the tutors)."

The National Honor Society is an organization where students can use their knowledge and leadership skills to help other students.

"Being a part of the National Honor Society for the past two years has been a fantastic experience," Caudill said. "It has been great to be a part of a group of students with similar interests."

▶136
students inducted in to the 2013-14 National Honor Society.

▶TARDY SWEEP CONTINUED FROM 1

HHS In Depth segment.

"(Ginder) announced it on the video," Nicholson said. "That was the first time I heard of that. I'm aware that attendance is evaluated every year or is part of the school's evaluations every year, but I wasn't aware we were penalized."

The general strain against many of the school's new rules this year has been ubiquitous and persistent, an issue which Ginder agrees could have been handled with more transparency had the cause and effect of the tardy changes been explained up front.

"It certainly would've helped (to explain the basis for the changes earlier)," Ginder said. "Especially to help our older students to understand the change."

Despite the communication gap, the early numbers leave little room for disagreement, as the number of tardies resulting in further discipline, such as detentions and in-school and out-of-school suspensions, are noticeably down from last year.

As students become more in-tune with the new expectations, Ginder expects the trend to carry over into the second semester.

"Almost all of our students understand (the importance of attendance)," Ginder said. "If you're in the hall when the bell rings, there is nearly nobody in the hall. We had our community tour recently(...) and one of the things they mentioned was how orderly things were and how when the bell rings there is nobody in the hall."

HOMESTEAD DEBUNKED

Myth: The administration will decide hooded sweatshirts should be against the school's dress code policy and will consequently be banned in the future.

Status: False - The rumors regarding a forthcoming ban on hooded sweatshirts are false; students will not be prohibited from wearing them.

"The rumor is false. I have not heard that at all. (This is the first time) I have heard this rumor of hooded sweatshirts being banned from," Susan Summers, assistant principal, said.

The administration has not had any discussion about hooded sweatshirts being banned. This is simply a rumor that spread throughout the school between students. Hooded sweatshirts are not an issue at this time, and administrators do not foresee them being a problem in the future.

"It was a bit of a surprise to me that students would think they were going to be banned," Summers said. "I have no idea where this rumor came from or why it became a rumor."

While hooded sweatshirts will not be banned, students should acknowledge the ways sweatshirts are not allowed to be worn while on school property.

"There has always been the rule that you cannot where your hood in the building, and sometimes students have to be reminded of that," Summers said. "But we just let them know that (they) have to put their hood down, and remind them that they are not to be worn inside of school at any time."

The rumors regarding hooded sweatshirts were entirely unfounded, as the administration has no problem with students wearing them to school, as long as students do so in an appropriate manner.

"Hooded sweatshirts have not caused any problems other than the occasional reminder that hoods are not to be worn in the building," Summers said.

Despite rumors and confusion regarding the school's policy on hooded sweatshirts, there will be no changes in dress code in this regard.

--Janay Alberts

District enrollment rises

Increased student enrollment brings increased funding

By Katie Dunlap
News Editor

The number of students enrolled in the Southwest Allen County Schools (SACS) district has increased from the 2012-13 school year to the current school year.

The number of students enrolled impacts the amount of funding the district receives from the state for financing salaries and other services throughout the district.

"For every school corporation the amount of funding you get is on the basis of how many students you have," Jim Coplen, SACS business manager, said. "When the enrollment increases or decreases, the amount of funding we get (is impacted)."

> "The quality of education has a lot to do with enrollment. We have a strong academic community and that encourages people to come to the district."
>
> **STEPHANIE MERKLING**
> *Environmental science teacher*

This year, the rise in enrollment provided for a significant increase in state funding. For each student, the state provides a certain amount of money to the school district, making the numbers critical for districts as they finalize their state-funded budgets.

"(The district's) number of students went up about 30 students, and we get about $4,900 per student," Coplen said. "That means we get about $150,000 more because of (additional students)."

The additional money from the state, determined by a formula, will go towards improving the learning environment in all district schools and will be put to use in financing the salaries of the district staff.

"(The Indiana School funding formula) is totally controlled by the state legislature and is the fund our referendum supplements," Philip Downs, associate superintendent, said. "It funds most salaries, (and) our utilities and supplies."

Right now, the SACS community is continuing to grow at a steady pace.

"Enrollment has been rather steady when you look at long-term trending," Coplen said. "However, the ebbs and flows of enrollment within that time period may range from a three to four percent growth all the way down to a decrease in students. For the most part we have been experiencing an average of a one percent growth each year."

Increases in enrollment seem to be directly impacted by developing homes in the SACS area.

"Enrollment increases for two basic reasons," Coplen said. "(First), new residential construction; in years when SACS experienced our highest growth, there was a substantial amount of new homes going up in our district. The second less reliable way to increase enrollment is for new families and students to move into our district and occupy existing housing."

The previous legislative session didn't produce a large funding increase for public schools. According to Coplen, the estimates for SACS are less than one percent increases in funding for the district's General Fund.

"The state works out a percentage increase to the fund as a whole; they tweak a formula they use, subtract out the money that is following students who are taking vouchers to private schools and then tell us how much we will get per student," Downs said.

The state checks the enrollment in school districts by selecting two days during the school year to receive official counts from the districts.

"Enrollment is determined by taking a count of our currently enrolled students on two particular days," Coplen said. "This school year those days are Sept. 13, 2013 and Feb. 14, 2014. The state uses these enrollment counts in the funding formula to determine our total funding of the general fund."

The enrollment in the SACS district continues to rise due to the precedent of excellence in education.

"(The quality) of education has a lot to do with (enrollment)," Stephanie Merkling, environmental science teacher, said. "We have a strong academic community and that encourages people to come to the district. Parents want to (expose) their children to the (best academic opportunities) possible."

The district foresees a continued increase in enrollment as the area continues to develop.

"SACS enrollment should continue to increase with a combination of new home starts and move-ins," Coplen said. "However, we believe the trend of increasing enrollments may slow and/or stop once available new home sites diminish."

▶MARCHING BAND CONTINUED FROM 1

Under the direction of Jonathan Meader and assistant director Nancy Barber, the Color Guard also works with the band in order to deliver an exhilarating show each year.

The color guard incorporates dance, aerobics, gymnastics, drill and flags to create a unifying tone within the performance.

"The color guard and the band interact frequently and in doing so, I have learned many new things and met many people," Madison Fiegl (11), color guard member, said. "We even got to dance with the drum line this year."

The Spartan Alliance Band has maintained a renowned reputation across the state over the years.

Winning numerous titles, the band has never fallen short of excellence.

In 2011, the Spartan Alliance Band won the state competition and was recognized as the Sudler Shield Award Recipient for delivering world-class skill in performing.

Furthermore, the band has returned to the state competition every year for the past 27 consecutive years.

The marching band has represented a sense of camaraderie and perseverance within the community as well.

Many students in the band relate their experience as nothing below unforgettable for the relationships made each year become cyclical in nature.

"Going into the performance at state, I was pretty nervous, which isn't typical for me before a band competition," Megan Read (12) said. "Of course I wanted to win, but the competitive outcome wasn't that important for me. I just wanted the last time I marched at Lucas Oil with the band to be our best show of the season, and I believe that it was, so I'm very proud of everyone and all that we accomplished. If I had to make the decision to join band again, I would do it in a heartbeat."

Students are highly encouraged to join the Spartan Alliance Band.

Members note it offers many valuable skills such as personal responsibility, time management and the importance of effort.

"When I was a freshman, I knew basically nothing about marching," Mary Rumsey (10) said. "I was interested in joining mostly because Mr. Wadkins scared me into it, but then I realized that it was worth the commitment and hard work in the end. This season I actually understood the process of putting a show on the field, so I could better take advantage of the opportunity to be in one of the best bands in the country."

The Homestead Spartan Alliance Band has worked towards its goal of placing well at competitions.

The band's dedication to performing has continued to put people in awe throughout the state every year.

"I'm very proud of the band," Steve Barber said. "It was an excellent finish to the season."

▶SECURITY CONTINUED FROM 1

for possible safety issues that arise.

"We have a crisis committee, with all different types of staff," Kintz said. "While we can't prepare for all situations, the committee prepares people to think in different scenarios."

Even with extensive safety measures in place, school resource officer Ingrid Herriott and Kintz both believe that some improvements could be made to security.

Herriott is the only resource officer for the entire SACS district, so she would like to have more officers in the district.

"I would like another officer," Herriott said. "Ninety percent of my time is spent here at Homestead."

Kintz agrees with Herriott that more officers would be a useful commodity to security.

"I would like to have two additional officers," Kintz said.

Rutva Shah (12) feels that increased security measures would not necessarily be a bad thing. Shah believes that access into and out of Homestead is too easy and that there need to be measures in place to restrict this easy access. She also says that students can easily let someone into school during the school day just by opening one of the side doors of the school.

"I think they should be more diligent about who is getting in the building at the beginning of school. Once you get in you can stay in school all day," Shah said. "Anyone can get in regardless of whether they go here or not. I can also let someone in just by opening the door."

Hannah Miller (12) disagrees with Shah. She says that the school already makes it hard for someone who is not supposed to be at school to get into the school.

"It seems to me that it would be difficult for someone to get in the school who is not supposed to be there," Miller said.

Miller believes, though, that there are other problems the school should address.

"I think Officer Herriott is very competent, but at the same time, the school is very large," Miller said. "If there was more 'spread out' security, I believe that the school would be able to answer more efficiently to anything that would happen."

While she is a proponent for increased school security, Shah also believes that too much security could impede education.

"If [school security] got to the point where the security was distracting, I would say it was too much," Shah said.

While Miller and Shah have suggested increased security at school, both agree that it's still safe.

"I generally feel very safe at Homestead in terms of security," Miller said.

Shah agrees with Miller, adding that Homestead is more secure than some of the other schools in Fort Wayne.

"I feel pretty secure in the sense that I know that there's always someone to make sure nothing bad happens," Shah said. "I think Homestead is one of the safer schools."

Herriott says that the school has a safe environment.

"Homestead is extremely safe. We have a full time officer; my whole job is based out of this building," Herriott said. "The unique thing about working in a school is that you get to know your clientele. There is more of a connection."

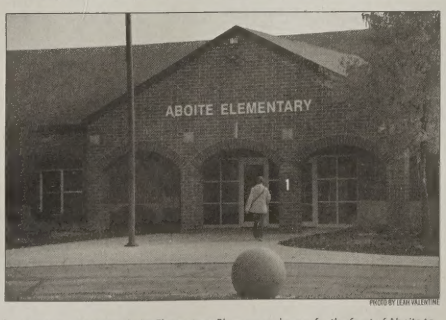

PHOTO BY LEAH VALENTINE

A visitor walks in to Aboite Elementary. Plans are underway for the front of Aboite to be remodeled since the office is not located in front of the doors, deeming it unsafe.

the SPARTANA
STAFF & EDITORIAL POLICY 2013-2014

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Staff members support the First Amendment in its entirety and oppose censorship in any form. The content of the paper is determined by the student staff. In cases of potentially controversial material, the Editorial Board will meet to decide the content of the newspaper. The staff will be assisted by the adviser in areas of professional ethics and legalities.

Material that is libelous or obscene as defined by Fort Wayne Newspapers or could cause a substantial and material disruption of the school day as defined by the Supreme Court will not be printed.

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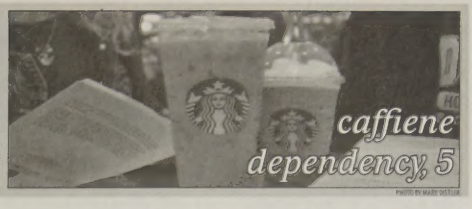
Public input will be accepted from the Homestead community in the form of letters to the editor. Letters must follow standards concerning libel or obscenity. Those that could cause a substantial and material disruption to the school day will not be printed. Letters can be e-mailed to The Spartana at thespartana@gmail.com



Native Americans not offended by Redskins name, no reason to change

By Colby Shoup
Writer

After much debate over the appropriateness of the name of Washington DC's NFL team, the Washington Redskins, throughout the years, a council in the district unanimously passed a resolution asking the team to change its controversial name and mascot. The NFL and the management for the Redskins refused to change the name and mascot and responded with a letter from Dan Snyder, the team's owner that stated why the team's name was not inappropriate.

At first I believed that the Redksins needed to change their name, but after doing some extensive research and reading the letter from Snyder, my mind was changed completely. As it turns out, when the Redskins were first named, the coach, as well as four of the players on the team were of Native American descent and were perfectly fine with the name, seeing it as a loving tribute to their remembered ancestors.

However, this does not excuse the fact that American dictionaries define the word redskin as a racial slur, in the same vein as the N word, and this has not silenced the outrage the general public feels over the decision to keep the name.

Many for the name change have made the argument that even though the name may have been seen as acceptable in 1932, when the team was first formed, it does not fit the standards of what is acceptable in the 21st century.

For a long time, I was one of these people, but I found some eye opening evidence in Snyder's letter that made me think differently.

"The highly respected Annenberg Public Policy Center polled nearly 1,000 self-identified Native Americans from across the continental U.S. and found that 90% of Native Americans did not find the team name 'Washington Redskins' to be 'offensive.'" Said Snyder in his October 9th letter to fans. Skeptical, I looked up the aforementioned poll and it turns out Snyder was not bending the truth at all. The poll in question was taken in 2004 and as far as I can tell, is completely legitimate.

Recently, there have been a series of polls taken online that reveal that the majority of non native Americans understand why the name would be offensive to Native Americans, but it is not the opinion of the majority of Americans that matters. What matters is the opinion of actual Native Americans. The general consensus of the American Indians seems to be that the name is not all that offensive.

Sure, there are people like Ray Halbritter, representative of the Onedia nation, who believe the name is offensive to their ancestors, but these people make up 10% of Native Americans, and this is not enough people to justify the name change. Lauren Lawhead (12), a Homestead student of Native American descent, is one of the majority of Americans descended from American Indians that agrees with me.

"Personally I don't think it's offensive at all because it's just a name. If it was used in a derogatory way, like it was intended to be negative, then, yes, it would be very offensive." Lawhead said.

Lawhead and I, and like-minded individuals think that America is constantly trying too hard never to offend anyone, and, a lot of the time, in the process we accidentally offend people.

The mostly Caucasian council that passed the resolution for the name change is implying that it will decide what is offensive to Native Americans for them, which is much more racist than the name 'The Redskins' ever was. In the future, we should listen to Native Americans more and perhaps even create a council of prominent American Indians to decide what is offensive to their people. I think that would mean a lot more to them than changing the, in the end quite arbitrary, name of a football team.

Bullying awareness overlooked

We think it doesn't happen here. The bullying videos forced upon students in advisory are met with a chorus of groans; they're found juvenile, unnecessary. However, recent incidences have proven that bullying is indeed a problem at this school, a problem that is seldom recognized by the student body.

Although this school is often characterized by high standards and state-recognized academic success, the fact is that bullying can come from all races, genders and social classes. Homestead is no exception.

Every day we pass by students who walk with their heads hung low, mute targets of insults and violence.

The problem is there are all different degrees of bullying; laughing in ridicule, verbal attacks, physical violence. There is such an inferred discrepancy between these actions that students fail to recognize the severity of it all. While physical violence is the most drastic form of bullying, the emotional trauma inflicted by bullies can be just as detrimental.

Despite the common excuse of "I was just kidding," there is always a clear difference between joking with friends and tormenting strangers. It might be acceptable to call a friend who you know is intelligent stupid, but unless you're fully aware of the situation of the other person, such degrading phrases should never be used. That girl who you called stupid could spend hours a day studying, only to receive mediocre grades. She could have a learning disability that hinders her progress, or she could be told that she's dumb so much at home that she cannot emotionally stand to hear it from her peers as well.

Beyond emotional bullying, physical bullying has a presence in our school larger than any of us care to admit. Just because fights aren't breaking out daily doesn't mean it doesn't happen. Both in and out of school, physical bullying is considered assault, meaning strict consequences and, for those over 18, even stricter repercussions tagged on to a permanent adult criminal record.

So regardless of whether it's asking the girl that sits alone every day to semi, only to tell her it was a joke, or punching the guy that struggles with making friends out of personal insecurity, bullying is real.

Bullying is present and bullying is a problem. It deserves recognition from the student body, and its victims deserve to know that they're not, as so many of them believe to be, alone.

The Ed Board

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Haiden Steingass
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Megan Cater

{The Bottom Line} *Students feel unattached to the bullying issue plaguing schools and have a misunderstanding of how the problem affects peers.*

STOLEN TREASURE

Music pirating sites disrespect composing artists, not marked as illegal to warn listeners

CARTOON BY EMILY SPATZ

By Katie Maher
Writer

Three out of four teenagers in the United States pirate music online every year, according to the Huffington Post. The punishment for this crime: five years in federal prison.

Of course, that does not mean that all 75% of the pirating teens are deceptive, incorrigible criminals. Most teens do not recognize that downloading music on these sites is wrong; however, it is.

Musicians want people to listen to and support their music, but music pirates need to be aware of why pressing the download button is wrong and not really supporting their favorite artists, and that purchasing an album or sharing CDs instead can make the music even more special.

Sites that distribute music often call themselves "free and legal", when in reality they are anything but what they claim to be. Because of the "free and legal" label, most teens will download the music, believing that they have not done anything wrong. Downloading music from pirating sites is considered stealing because the artists are earning no profit for their work when music is obtained in this fashion.

Take this into consideration: would the artists want their fans to buy their album where the album's success can be recognized and earn a profit for their work, or would they prefer their fans to just download the album and not have a chance of placing a spot on the charts and not earn anything for all of the hard work put into the album?

> "Musicians want people to listen to and support their music, but music pirates need to be aware of why pressing the download button is wrong and not really supporting their favorite artists, and that purchasing an album or sharing CDs instead can make the music even more special."
>
> **KATIE MAHER**

A lot of teens turn to downloading music online because of the costs of buying the album in the store or on iTunes. A great solution to cut down the cost and still purchase the music legally is to share CDs with friends. It is not illegal to burn an album onto a disc to share with friends, but keep in mind that it is illegal to do so if one is charging others for the burnt disc for their own profit.

At first the idea of burning and sharing might sound very unreasonable, but most will find that doing so saves a ton of money, and is actually a great way to bond with friends.

Then there are people that do not want to buy the whole album because there might only be a few songs that they enjoy, but this does not mean that downloading single tracks is the best way to go. iTunes cards allow the listeners to buy only the songs they like, and stores, such as Kroger, have a rewards program put in place for those who buy iTunes cards, which can go towards cutting grocery costs.

Although it is rare to get caught and fined for pirating music, it is not worth the risk. Taking the alternative routes to obtain music legally is safer for the listener and also gives the artists the attention they deserve.

Digital Downfall

70 percent of online listeners see no wrong in illegally downloading music.

Every minute, over **100,000** visits to piracy sites occur.

The average digital music library contains **$800** of pirated music.

75 percent of computers contain at least one file dowloaded illegally.

twitter take

The Spartana attempts to capture the most impulsive responses on Twitter.

Question: "If field trips were allowed, where would you choose to go?"

@yo_GABY_gabba - Gaby Meissner (10) ▶ "Genovia."

@jcbdvs - Jacob Davis (9) ▶ "Subway."

@nickvanburk - Nicholas Van Burk (12) ▶ "What do I have to say to be in the newspaper..."

@PennyB_Blogging - Penny Bola (10) ▶ "Narnia!"

@Ashley071397 - Ashley Stevens (11) ▶ "Auburn Cord Duesenburg Museum. Or anywhere with free food. Either or."

@BabyBerghoff - Sarah Berghoff (12) ▶ "Science Central because it's freaking Science Central."

NSA oversteps expressed authority

Spying agency crosses privacy boundaries, encroaches upon personal liberties

By Kylie Poling
Opinion Editor

The United States government has been monitoring its citizens and their activities since the country's inception.

The National Security Agency (NSA) was established in 1952 and currently collects data from a variety of sources under the guise of protecting the US and its citizens, sometimes at the expense of citizens' privacy and basic liberties.

Albeit an important aspect of national security, the NSA has taken its spying too far. It has passed the point of protection and has now become an asinine infringement of privacy, spying on American citizens to the point where security has become a harassment.

Edward Snowden, a former NSA contractor, has acted in accordance, and as a result has leaked many top secret documents from the NSA, among other national agencies, in an effort to make the government more transparent.

Documents leaked by Snowden show that the NSA hacked the Google Front End Server, which is the main communication link between Yahoo and Google data centers, and have shared much of that information to its headquarters in Fort Meade, Md. Over 181 million new records, including private e-mailing receipts, text, audio and video were received there over a 30-day period in January.

The NSA has said that it is "focused on discovering and developing intelligence about valid foreign intelligence targets only," however, this does not seem to be the case, seeing as it felt the need to access these documents secretly, despite being authorized by Section 702 of the FISA Amendments Act.

Despite being perfectly legal thanks to laws created specifically with the NSA in mind, the spying has gotten out of hand.

"We are outraged at the lengths to which the government seems to have gone to intercept data from our private fiber networks, and it underscores the need for urgent reform," David Drummond, Google's chief legal officer, said.

Google, Apple and Microsoft, as well as many other large tech companies, have filed complaints with the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court asking for more transparency in the government's security inquiries.

Hacking into tech companies' data centers is not being transparent. Rather, it is a secretive, deceptive and intrusive ploy enacted by the government that begs several questions: what comes next? Is it even possible for the government to become more covert?

The NSA collects what it has dubbed "Citizen Data" from the following sources: Website visits, Internet searches, phone calls, Skype calls, emails, text messages, credit card information, financial information, legal documents, travel documents and health records.

▶74 percent of adults feel as though the organization's surveillance intrudes on Americans' privacy rights.

Not only does the NSA collect information on the American people, but it also collects data from those that the US calls an ally.

It has already come to light that the US has tapped the phone of Angela Merkel, German Chancellor, but there has also been assigned detailed surveillance to other allies, including France, Japan and Brazil, alongside 80 other American embassies and consulates across the world.

Instead of worrying about external issues that pose no threat to the safety of our nation, the government should be trying to fix the internal issues that we are faced with every day in this country.

There is a line between being cautious and being paranoid–the NSA is paranoid. It has overstepped its boundaries under the scapegoat of protection for the United States, but has instead gone to war with the people it has sworn to protect.

Fall Play, 5

PHOTO BY MARY DISTLER

Student performs for world-famous singer

Senior Meridian Prall one of four to attend master class at University of Toledo after audition

Modern prima donna Meridian Prall (12) wins attention with her powerful vocals, earning herself a humbling opportunity to sing for world-renowned songstress Marilyn Horne.

Spartana: How did you get started with singing?

Prall: I guess I sort of got discovered sophomore year. Denise Bernardini came backstage. She was in the audience, and she told me that I needed to be her voice student so that no one else could get me and mess me up. That's how I kind of decided that's what I wanted to do in my life.

Spartana: How did you get involved with opera specifically?

Prall: I was doing ISSMA and the songs were all classical for that pretty much. I think (opera) is what I'm best at, and it's what feels the best. Being an opera singer and communicating a story like that is just so unique.

Spartana: How did you get the opportunity to perform for Marilyn Horne?

Prall: For a while my voice teacher was trying to get Marilyn Horne to come to University of Toledo to do a master class. That finally worked out so she made it so I could audition for (the class) at the University. I was one of the four people to sing in the master class for Marilyn.

Spartana: Describe your feelings when you passed the audition?

Prall: I was super nervous because I knew I had to make a good impression so that I could make it more than just someone singing for someone. But I was really happy, and I was like, "Yay, I'm finally doing something crazy." I've done some other crazy things, but that was one of the craziest things I've done.

Spartana: How did you have to prepare for the audition?

Prall: I had to prepare five songs, and they had to be contrasting. (Preparing) was a buildup of years though, because I had been working with that repertoire for some time. It was just an accumulation of really hard work and research.

Spartana: What is your most memorable performance?

Prall: Definitely the one I did for Marilyn Horne. I feel like that was the first time that somebody could really take me somewhere. That was the first time I got to unleash myself on the professional world a little bit. I have to admit when I started singing, I kind of held back a bit because I was nervous, but she's so good that she just turned it around and she brought out so much voice that I didn't know I had in me.

Spartana: What do you wish to accomplish within your future?

Prall: I want to just be able to support myself, for one, by singing. It's really not about the money for me. It's about doing what I love and feeling good about myself, and I love being able to do something that only I can do it the way I do. I like to be able to be something special by myself.

Spartana: What advice do you have for someone wishing to pursue a career in music?

Prall: If you really love it, I think you should just go for it. While I met Marilyn Horne, she said that her two favorite words in the world are excellence and self-belief, and I believe (those are) the most important things about having a music career.

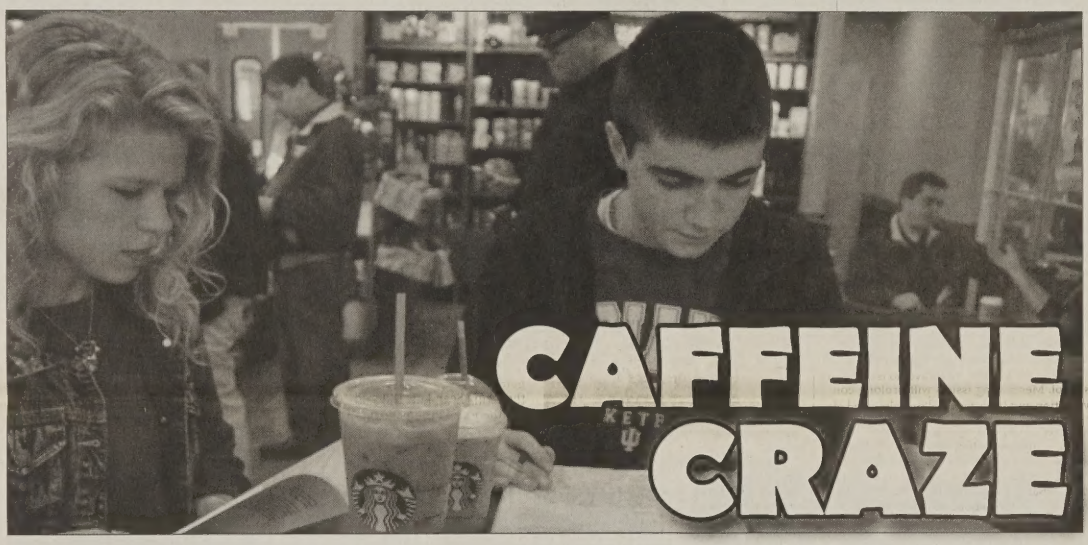
Spartana: What does music provide for you?

Prall: When I'm onstage, I get this high that I can't compare to anything else. That's my drug–it's what I do.

It's kind of like a relationship that I have. It's like a friend nobody else could be for me. I feel like I have a purpose. I feel good about myself afterwards.

-William Ngo

PHOTO BY ALLIE NELSON



CAFFEINE CRAZE

Student coffee consumption not only a necessity for energy, but a popular social activity

By Sarah Camino
Writer

Coffee: the hot beverage choice of the chic individual possesses not only coveted energy in the form of caffeine, but cultural prevalence as well.

Entities such as the official Starbucks twitter account and hashtags like "coffee probs" aim to describe in 140 characters the first world dilemmas of craving your preferred caffeinated beverage. Instagram is flooded with Starbucks glamour shots featuring color-corrective filters and reverent captions studded with heart-eye emojis.

"One reason the (Starbucks) trend may have started is because you can sit and do homework there or grab coffee to go with your friends," Elizabeth McAninch (10) said. "Either way, it's very relaxing."

Especially during the holidays, people carry a trendy Pumpkin Spice Latte or Peppermint Mocha like an accessory.

"I don't think (caffeine) really has an impact (on how I act)," Olivia Miller, English Department Head, said. "I think it's more social and routine-based. I also see a lot of students with Starbucks, and I don't know if (the attraction to it) is as much the caffeine as it is the social phenomenon."

For those unaware that a beverage can be considered in vogue, social media and cultural consensus prove that Starbucks and other cafés are not only places where whimsically fantastical combinations of coffee, flavoring and frothy whipped cream are a reality, but also the social gathering sites and hipster meccas of popular culture.

"My friend Gaby Meissner (10) introduced me to Starbucks," McAninch said. "(My friends and I) usually get some Starbucks before we go see a movie or go shopping. It's something you can get quickly with a group of people, and it's so nice to be able to have a warm drink in the winter if you're walking around the mall."

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>
> **OLIVIA MILLER**
> *English Department Head*

Coffee is the world's second most valuable traded commodity behind petroleum, according to Global Exchange, with the popularity of gourmet coffee flavors on the rise. According to the National Coffee Drinking Trends study annually conducted by the National Coffee Association, 1/3 of Americans drink a gourmet coffee beverage every day and the consumption of traditional coffee has dropped by 7% in one year.

"I don't drink black coffee," McAninch said. "So I usually get either a smoothie, or something carmely or chocolatey that doesn't really taste as strong as pure coffee."

Not all coffee-drinkers choose frothy frappuccinos and Keurig flavors, however. Social statements aside, a growing number of students rely on caffeine to get them through the school day, even if it means chugging a cold cup of leftover brew in the precious minutes before first period.

Academic pressures, after school commitments and social obligations mean that some students are committed to hours of sleep to coffee ratios, especially after a long night of hitting the books or an athletic event that lasted longer than expected.

"I drink coffee every morning because it's kind of a necessity to keep me alert and focused," Marie Hege (11), a Starbucks patron since 6th grade, said. "(When I don't have my coffee), I'm kind of in a bad mood, so coffee definitely helps me be more energetic, more outgoing and more involved with school."

However, the debate over whether or not caffeine is addictive still brews. For teenagers and adults alike, a cup of joe, whether made at home or by a barista, is not just a caffeine buzz, but a refreshing dose of flavor and a casual way to catch up with friends.

"I drink (coffee) because it keeps me awake, but mostly because I love the taste, and the holiday specials, which are my favorite, keep me looking forward to upcoming seasons," Hege said.

Change of season offers volunteer opportunities

Key Club sponsors work for students to help those affected by the colder weather, members gather experience

By Mallory McCauley
Writer

As fall begins to give way to colder weather, students begin to give back to the community. Service projects are one simple and popular way for students to get involved in something bigger than school. Many of these service projects can not only be done through the help of Key Club, but also with the imagination and the willingness to help of the individual.

Many students use Key Club as one way to become connected with their community. Key Club offers students the opportunity to help the community with volunteer hours. As the club presents different volunteer opportunities, students sign up for what they are interested in to log their service hours.

"(Key Club) provides so many opportunities, and you can get involved anywhere in your community," Tessa Virgilio (9) said.

Key Club is meant to both help students find a way to benefit their community while also helping them have fun while doing so.

"(Key Club) is a good way to meet new friends and have fun," Allison Volk (11) said.

Many people may have the presumption that service projects and volunteering entail seemingly sluggish hours of boring work; however, this may not be the case. Many places around the community welcome volunteers and even have volunteering programs that allow students to volunteer in something that interests them while giving back to the community.

Alex Maher (10) has swam for seven years and still actively shows a love for swimming. When she decided to volunteer at a swim meet, the event showed to be well suited to her interests.

Two fall service projects available to students are the SWAC fall Invitational at South Side High School on Nov. 23 and a Santa's Workshop on Nov. 27 at Fort Wayne's Community Center.

Outside of Key Club, students still have easy access to community service projects. These don't always have to be organized events; sometimes they can just be simple ideas such as raking an elderly neighbor's leaves for them or, as the weather gets colder, shoveling snow. Throughout fall, the community reveals a deeper need for help and volunteers as the weather gets colder and those who are homeless are in more need of help.

"(Students can) go to a soup kitchen and help because the weather is getting colder, so I'm sure a lot of people would be in," Maher said.

> "(Key Club) provides so many opportunities, and you can get involved anywhere in your community."
>
> **TESSA VIRGILIO**
> *Key Club Member*

Volunteering is not always a rigid program in which the person volunteering would have inflexible or too long of hours. For instance, Science Central has a volunteer program that is very flexible and is more tailored to the student's preferences rather than the program's. Volunteering as a high school student does not stop here. It can travel on to a student's future, opening up job opportunities in some instances. It also allows students to explore different areas of work to see what they are truly interested in through hands-on experience.

Giving back to the community and volunteering is important for the unity of the community. There are thousands of people in the community who work every day to keep things moving, and an easy way to show gratitude is to put in a few volunteer hours here and there if possible. In some cases, helping someone out can in turn motivate him or her to help the community also, setting a chain reaction in place.

Avoiding awkward family encounters requires strategy

The leaves are changing and people are already complaining about Christmas decorations making their annual appearances into department stores across the country. Really, I don't know why everyone is so surprised when they begin to see tinsel and wreaths while grocery shopping since this happens every single year.

But the shelving of Christmas decorations is not the main issue many people face as Thanksgiving approaches. With annual family gatherings fast approaching, husbands and wives everywhere worry about the snide remarks their mothers- and fathers-in-law will make this year about the clothes they wear. Aunts and uncles scramble to remember the names of their nieces and nephews. Grandparents will catch up on sleep before a week of visiting daughters and sons.

JESS SAYIN'

BY JESSICA TEBBEN
Life Editor

And teenagers like you and me will dread the upcoming whirlwind of questions from aunts, uncles, cousins, second cousins, grandparents and great grandparents alike.

Do you have a boyfriend yet?

Have you started thinking about college?

How's school going?

What grade are you in again?

The same questions that you're asked every year are going to be asked this year just the same. Along with the typical remarks from aunts and uncles you never see including things like, "Wow, look how big you're getting!" and "I remember when you were just a baby!"

The solution to these is simple: one-word answers. Unless you want to get into a deep-rooted conversation with your uncle about what you need to do to get into college, just say that you haven't really thought about it.

If your grandma asks you if you have a boyfriend or a girlfriend for the fifth time in the last ten minutes, tell her you don't. Even if you do, tell her no. And then escape by excusing yourself to go to the restroom. Avoid contact with her for the remainder of Thanksgiving night.

School is going well like always when your aunt asks. You love it. You have no issue with school. Mentioning issues will prolong conversation and leave you feeling exhausted after trying to explain why Wednesday always has really bad lunch options.

And, of course, when that one older cousin who you barely ever see asks you what grade you are in for the fifth consecutive year, tell them what grade you're in. Say nothing else. And if they rave about how old you're getting, just nod your head and agree. Smile and laugh nervously before claiming that you have to go help your mom set the table, even though you really don't.

Aside from the long, awkward and often tedious conversations that you have with older family members every year, you also have to deal with the little kids running around the kitchen and grabbing onto your legs and dragging you all over the place.

Don't get me wrong, having little cousins can be fun in short intervals of time, but when placed in a small house packed with a ton of people for hours on end with only one person they feel like they can play with (which would just so happen to be you), they can become, for lack of a better word, annoying.

The simple solution that I use with my little cousins is to tell them how tired I am over and over again until they move on to the next cousin. And, technically, I'm not lying. I probably just played like twenty games of hide-and-seek with them, so I truly am exhausted.

And, of course, the final issue faced during the holidays, especially Thanksgiving, has to do with my favorite subject: food.

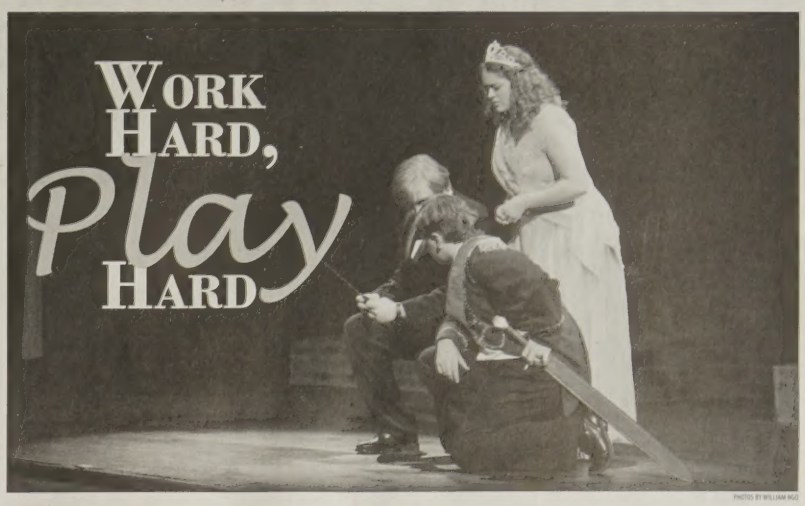
Generally, the overconsumption of food on Thanksgiving night is a huge issue for not only me, but also probably everyone else in the United States. We all have one night to eat two pounds of turkey and three pounds of mashed potatoes and not feel so guilty about it since it is Thanksgiving after all.

> "Mentioning issues will prolong conversation and leave you feeling exhausted after trying to explain why Wednesday always has really bad lunch options."
>
> **JESSICA TEBBEN**

There is no real solution to overeating on Thanksgiving. If you gain weight and have the motivation to go to the gym, then for your own good, go. If you don't have the motivation to go to the gym, then don't go. I will probably be doing the latter and continuing my unhealthy consumption of potato chips, even after Thanksgiving is long gone.

If you're a picky eater like I used to be, you might have issues trying to find something that you actually like. The safest things on the menu are usually cheesy hash browns or plain noodles or something. Other than that, just eat the desserts. Everyone will be too busy making awkward small talk to notice anyway.

Overall, the best way to survive the holidays, whether at Thanksgiving dinner or a Christmas party, is to avoid all contact and interaction with everyone else attending the dinners. In other words, do what you probably normally do and sit in the corner of the family room playing Solitaire on your cellphone.



PHOTOS BY WILLIAM HUO

Theater provides the chance for actors to 'express themselves'

BY AWBREI VACHON
Writer

Entertainment has been an important asset to society since the beginning of time. It is a way to stimulate the brain, bring laughter and produce great joy within a group of people. It keeps things in life interesting, and has even become a priority in high schools all around the world.

Incorporating theater into high school students' lives took root a long time ago, and the tradition still stands today. Each year, students hone in on their acting skills and get ready to try out for the annual fall play, hoping to be able to get up on stage and express the talent and passion they have, and each year, drama teacher Victoria Malooly makes sure it can happen.

"I really wanted to do something that was going to be funny and had great characters and a lot of characters so I could get a lot of kids involved," Malooley said. "I must have read (more than) 30 different plays to try and figure out which (one) really (fit) with what I (wanted) to do this year and also what (was) going to be appropriate for school."

In the end, the winner turned out to be The Mouse that Roared. Written in 1955 by a man named Leonard Wibberly, the story was turned into both a movie and a play. Malooley grew up watching Peter Sellers in the movie version and became convinced this particular production fit all of her requirements for the play this year.

"Perhaps the most hilarious part about all of it is that they end up accidentally winning," Malooley said.

This particular play, although designed to be comical and send ripples of laughter through the crowds, also has a valuable lesson to be learned from it.

"If you think about the theme, it's this itty-bitty country in the middle of (Europe) going to war with the United States, and they win," Sean Low (12) said. "(So) I would say there's no task too great to overcome."

Theater has the power to teach people lessons like this and more, for both the audience and the actors. By having to portray different character roles, actors learn to accept different people's positions in life, and in addition, performing also builds trust among the actors within a show.

"The cast has this trust bond where everyone is trusting you to put on a great show and you're trusting them to put on a great show," Low said. "So it's just a well-knit group of people who share the same interest and it's very comforting to know that you're with people that are just like you."

Somewhat ironically, actors seem to become more themselves when they are not actually being themselves, so to speak.

"Theater has showed me things about myself that I didn't understand before," Duncan Seibert (11) said.

Emma Zolman (11) agrees with Seibert, and thinks it helps people accomplish personal goals by encouraging them to step outside their comfort zones and explore a bolder side of their personalities.

Like any form of art, a lot of work goes into the making of the piece, and students put a lot effort into the plays every year because it is their passion, and it is what they know best.

"(In theater, compared to other forms of art), you yourself are the art," Zolman said. "It's a way for people to express themselves."

Top: Actors from the fall play, The Mouse that Roard, peform a scene where news about a war is announced through a radio. Bottom: Sean Low (12) expresses confusion during his last play of high school.

Winter weather worries drivers

Students fear ice and snow will hamper driving safety in coming months

BY JESSICA TEBBEN
Life Editor

After the first snowfall of the year has already passed, new drivers are growing nervous about the bad weather that lies farther down the road. Amateur and seasoned drivers alike are faced once again with the arrival of icy danger as the months grow colder and the occurrence of car accidents grows larger.

Already seeing plenty of car accidents without snow, perhaps the most prevalent being fender-benders, one may think car accident occurrences rise during the winter. However, Ingrid Herriott, school resource officer, proves the number of accidents around the school do not rise as much as one might think during the winter.

"We have accidents here in our parking lot with students leaving the school somewhat regularly," Herriott said. "I would say once a month or once every other month, and then during the winter months when there's severe weather, that might increase by one or two."

Although accident statistics around the school do not see a significant rise, students are still advised to take precautions while driving over ice and snow. Along with ensuring an adequate amount of braking time and slowing, Officer Herriott suggests making sure ice and snow is clear from all windows.

"As you're driving, you're constantly looking around, over your shoulder, like if you're going to change lanes," Herriott said. "You don't know if you just clear off your driver's side window and part of your windshield, you may leave yourself blocked and not be able to see traffic around you."

Herriott also advises extra caution on bridges and highway overpasses, along with slowing down in general.

As November progresses, new drivers are experiencing high levels of anxiety as they anticipate their foreign and icy journey to school during the first snow storm.

> "I definitely will (get annoyed with the people driving slowly because I do not drive slow at all."
>
> **HANNAH KIPP (11)**
> *Student Driver*

"I am a little nervous just because my car does not have anti-lock brakes, so my brakes can't lock out," Lindsay Musser (11) said. "It's scary in general to be doing something new."

To ease the nerves of new drivers, both the school and the city and county road departments are taking precautions, such as the familiar traffic guards and the laying down of salt for ice and plowing of snow in both the parking lots and the roads in front of the school.

"The school does a super good job of making sure the lots are plowed and there's salt put down on ice," Officer Herriott said.

As new drivers begin to take overcautious turns on icy streets, more seasoned drivers, including Hannah Kipp (11), begin to grow annoyed with the slow maneuvers of their newly-licensed peers.

"I definitely will (get annoyed with the people driving slowly) because I do not drive slow at all," Kipp said.

Despite the eagerness of experienced drivers to get to school on time on snowy winter mornings, precautions need to be taken by practiced drivers and novice drivers alike.

"We preach defensive driving because you know that maybe you're in control of your car as an experienced driver(...) but you don't know that the people around you have that same experience," Herriott said.

Although it is still important to be cautious on snow and ice, it is not expected for student car accidents to increase this season.

"I think that the kids do a pretty good job for the most part of slowing down in the parking lot and being cautious of ice," Herriott said.

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SPORTS

PHOTO BY REAGAN MIKESELL

Preseason training prepares sports players

Indoor and outdoor practices gives students opportunity to prepare for spring seasons

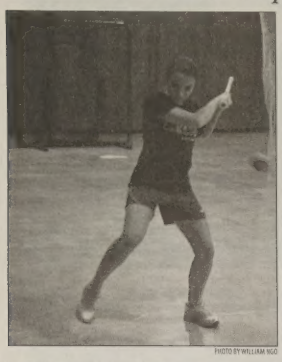

PHOTO BY WILLIAM NGO

Veronika Grote (12) eyes an incoming ball and prepares to swing during an afterschool training session.

By Tessa Lutz
Social Media Manager

With fall sports coming to an end, spring sports such as softball, baseball and track start their preseason training.

This is the time where the upperclassmen meet the new players and the incoming freshmen.

Preseason practices for baseball and softball have already begun, and track training starts in January.

Before season practice serves not only to raise the playing level of the teams but also as a period of time for the teams to learn how to cooperate with one another.

"I think (preseason practices) bring us closer," Ben Schwartz (11), baseball player, said. "We get to know each other's ability, and it's kind of like bonding. The freshman come and try to blend in. It's like they don't want the coach to know them just yet."

The players who decide to come to the practices serve as an asset to their teams.

"It's really great to see the girls coming out and being excited about softball," Veronika Grote (12), softball player, said. "We have a lot of young girls. A lot of freshman come, and getting them exposed to how we play and how we practice early is good."

1 senior will return to the baseball diamond for her fourth year on the softball team.

Despite the additional work the teams put in now, the workload will skyrocket once the seasons are in full swing in a few months.

"After our spring season, we have two weeks off, and then we play all summer," Grote said. "We just go out and play games against other teams and in tournaments on the weekends. Then when school starts up, we get another two weeks and then we do normal practices twice a week."

Within the practices, the teams work on conditioning which consists of improving their strength, speed and agility.

Conditioning does more than advance the team as a whole; it helps them stay safe and healthy as well.

"Conditioning helps alleviate injuries, because if you're in shape, then you build up to (the season)," Jessica Kelly (12), track runner, said. "If you try to go straight into it, then you're going to get shin splints, sprains and fractures. That takes away from the runners, then we have less people to contribute to our team."

As the track season slowly approaches, the team is continuing to prepare for the addition and change of pace brought on by a new coach.

Although the team begins practice in the winter, the indoor workouts are as effective as the outdoor ones.

"We train outside, but a lot of times there is still snow and ice so we actually are still stuck inside," Kelley said. "We do a lot of abs and P90X. The preseason is a lot of conditioning."

Each team holds unique preseason goals, but ultimately, the groups are striving to reach sectionals, regionals and even state with an emphasis on furthering themselves as a team.

"We want to win state. We got pretty close last year but fell short," Schwartz said. "We had a lot of seniors leave, so the team is going to have to step up."

PHOTOS BY REAGAN MIKESELL

GET IT, GOT IT, GOOD

After joining the school's basketball team, student gains nationwide attention

By Austen Cummings
Writer

Caleb "Biggie" Swanigan (10) was the only freshman on the varsity basketball team last year, and has not failed to build a reputation since then.

"It was a good experience playing with guys like Nick Gamble and Seth Coate and older guys, but I feel like I'm ready for this season being a sophomore and being acquainted with playing," Swanigan said.

Chris Johnson, head coach, had his reasoning for putting Swanigan on the varsity team.

"He was the best player at that position, so that's why we had to get him up there," Johnson said.

Being a clear asset to the group, Swanigan quickly made his mark on the team.

"He has great hands and great footwork and is a very good basketball player," Johnson said.

"He is very tough to defend one-on-one underneath his size and strength, and he has gotten a lot better from last year."

Ryan Cotter (12) played next to Swanigan last year and witnessed his skills and potential.

"He was dominant in the paint and on the rebounds," Cotter said. "He really anchored the offense down inside."

Aside from Swanigan's height, the athlete carries other talents, as well.

"The height helps, but we also have guys like Dana that are taller than me. I help put the team together as a jail-wise defensively. (I am) trying to make the whole team better," Swanigan said.

> "It was a good experience playing with guys like Nick Gamble ('13) and Seth Coate ('13) and older guys, but I feel like I'm ready for this season being a sophomore and being acquainted with playing."
>
> **CALEB SWANIGAN (10)**
> *Center*

Swanigan has been playing basketball competitively since seventh grade, but has been enjoying the less strategic sides of the sport as well.

In hindsight, many of Swanigan's peers heard he would not be returning to play for the team.

"It really wasn't a move. It was just more of a visit, but then I thought I was going to stay out there. It was just a lot of confusion, and then I ended up coming back," Swanigan said. "I never really moved for sure."

Coaches see the qualities in every player, and when there is a player like Swanigan, his abilities are unlikely to go unseen.

"He is a division one, big time basketball player," Johnson said. "He's being recruited by Michigan State or offered by Michigan State, Georgetown, and Tennessee. I am sure Purdue and Michigan will be up there. He has been asked about Indiana, so he is a big time player, and we're excited. We hope to surround him with a lot of new players that we have."

Having a division one teammate brings attention to the team, but also brings extra confidence to the team.

"It's a great feeling," Cotter said, "It helps everyone around us. There are always some top level schools stopping in. He makes everyone else around him better. And he never has the attitude that he is better than anyone. He still works hard."

With offers from highly known schools, the athlete has to pick and choose which schools he wants to focus on.

"I do have a plan," Swanigan said, "I do not know what college I am going to but in the future I will be narrowing down that list."

STAND TALL

Although Caleb "Biggie" Swanigan (10) is only a sophomore, colleges already made their efforts to reach out to this young, growing star. Swanigan received offers from the following colleges:

- MICHIGAN STATE
- GEORGETOWN
- TENNESSEE

SOURCES: 247SPORTS.COM, BLUEWHITEILLUSTRATED.COM AND PICKS-BASKETBALL.COM

City championship goal drives hockey team players

Athletes feel the pressure to attain a fifth consecutive title, working to rebuild and strengthen technique

By Adam Swiatkowski
Writer

Hockey season is underway as the team had already played over a dozen games and is looking to continue its success across the Fort Wayne area.

"We are looking to win the City Championship again," Rikky Stephens (12) said. "We have won it four times in a row now; this season, we are trying to make it our fifth. (The team) also has a goal to win the class 3A State Championship."

This season, however, will not go as easily as previous years. The graduation of many key upperclassmen caused the team to rely on every player's full efforts.

Together, the members can push through their games in hopes of that championship match.

"From last year, we have lost 93 percent of our scoring, so we hope to have more players step up and start scoring, as opposed to just seniors," Peter Haffner (12) said. "We can't rely on only three main players like last year."

The team attempts to improve by focusing on key aspects in practices. Certain drills and ideas are reserved for specific days of the week. The team's agenda changed to ensure previous year's successes can be met and surpassed.

"We've basically been working on working as a team better, since we don't have as many skilled players (as in earlier years)," Jay Conkling (12) said. "We've been trying to get all of our lines producing and really work on scoring on offense, and we've also worked on power plays and penalty kill."

Stephens, Haffner and Conkling serve as upperclassmen leaders, hoping to be an example towards younger players just beginning the program.

"(As seniors), we lead by example," Haffner said. "We have been playing for the same coach for three or four years now, so we understand what he likes and have learned by now what he dislikes. We focus on minimizing the amount of mistakes the team makes in practice and games."

Beyond specific drills, the team also sets aside time to learn about its opponents' style of play, allowing for extra preparation ahead of matchups.

"We always have practices where we talk about the team we are facing and what (skills they have), as well as what their weaknesses are," Conkling said. "We try to be as ready as possible come game day."

The flair displayed by previous teams is also an aspect the upperclassmen intend to disregard.

Instead, they are looking to win through hard work, mental and physical toughness and passion for the game.

"We want to include all of our lines in scoring, as well as playing a more blue-collar style of hockey," Conkling said. "We want to go back to focusing on hitting and scoring (hard-worked) goals, as opposed to all of the pretty goals we used to score."

Though it may be difficult, the hockey players hope to see a good turnout to their home games to boost support for their game.

"(A big student section) helps so much, although we can't always hear what's being said," Haffner said. "Knowing that (our fans) are there is a cool feeling, and seeing students cheer us on (motivates us) to play hard."

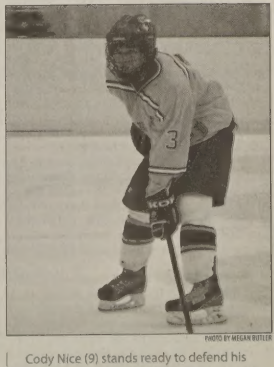

PHOTO BY MEGAN BUTLER

Cody Nice (9) stands ready to defend his team in a match against Northrop.

Harsh coaches drive athletes away, create imposibility of true victory

HAIDEN'S HIGHLIGHTS

BY HAIDEN STEINGASS
Sports Editor

There is one thing which is a close second to the fulfillment of winning in any sport: feedback from a coach. One could feel an utmost confidence walking off the court after scoring 10 points, but the second an instructor says, "You could have scored more," every bit of self-assurance melts away in an instant.

There is a key delicacy which resides in an athlete. His goals are to maximize his performance and to make his instructor proud. It is the sole responsibility as a coach to enlighten his players, but in too many cases coaches are failing to bring about positivity. Rather, they take the approach of verbally scorning their players at the expense of the athletes' feelings and self-confidence.

An excess of sports players perceive the constant demeaning remarks as something they are expected to tolerate or otherwise end their careers, but I am in complete disagreement with this fashion of instruction. I have witnessed both athletes and this is neither fair nor justified.

One memorable instance has triggered my empathy, as it happened a couple years ago with a close friend. It was the season of his junior year, and he was the typical athlete to look out for; he had potential and knew exactly how to use it.

His sport was his passion since he was running around in diapers, but after a disagreement with his coach, everything he desired for his senior year was suddenly abandoned.

Apparently, the coach did not grant my friend any playing time throughout the last game of the season, resulting in a devastating loss. The athlete expressed his confusion and disappointment to his instructor in regards to his participation in the game.

The coach responded in an angry, disdainful manner and proceeded to furtively tell the player's teammates that he should not return the following season. He took his coach's impulsive advice and ended his athletic career as soon as he heard the gossip.

Watching my friend go from being in love with a sport to trying to pick up the pieces after quitting made me uneasy. Maybe it was a heat of the moment kind of remark by his trainer, or maybe there was truly a tiff between my friend and his coach.

Nonetheless, there is an expectation to uphold as a teacher, a role model and a cheerleader. The typical teenage athlete's mind is vulnerable. They simply want to prove their place on a team and be recognized for their accomplishments, not their letdowns.

In regards to my own personal experience, dance coaches have the reputation of some of the harshest coaching styles. Perfection is key; anything less is a disappointment.

I am a sensitive person, no matter how objective I try to be, so when I was faced with a teacher that shouted commands and criticizing my every move, I did not receive this as helpful or motivational in any way.

In fact, this approach to communication completely turned me off to the sport and was one of the reasons I threw my tights and ballet shoes under my bed and called it quits.

Most dancers are not as sensitive as I was, and most athletes do not end their careers in the way my friend did, but I still believe there are significant consequences when a coach would rather scorn his players instead of encourage them.

The sad truth is that victory is only half of a win for the athlete. The other half is bearing the heavy load of a mean spirited coach. At the beginning of a season there is an aspiring athlete with the whole package: the attitude, the talent, the determination. But out comes a manufactured product, someone that has put aside his own will to be a champion in the eyes of his coach.

PHOTOS BY REAGAN MIKESELL

HOOPS *of* IMPROVEMENT

Last season's disappointing loss inspires team to further excel

BY ETHAN YDE
Writer

The girls basketball team is going into its season ready to improve and excited to be a strong competitor.

"Our most important goal is getting better every day," Josie Fisher (11) said. "That way when post season comes, we can advance as far as possible. We will be successful this season because we have a good group of players to contribute to our talent level."

The primary goals of this season are to win conference and compete at the state level. Last year's team put forth its full effort but ended up being disappointed in the sectionals game when the scoreboard showed just one point that separated them from victory. Now, the team will work even harder in practices to avoid tough losses.

"It is important that we continue to improve in all areas of the game, but three areas that we will emphasize will be our defensive intensity, ability to rebound the ball and communication," Rod Parker, coach, said.

A strong emphasis is placed on working cohesively on the court, since teamwork is a main aspect of the game. That same bond is present on and off of the court.

"My favorite thing about the team is that we are literally a family," Savannah Buck (10) said. "All of us have basically grown up together and have respect for each other on and off the court."

Athletes of all grades represent the varsity team, and each player has a specific play-style that makes them a strong component to the team. The girls expect that the team will make it to state this year.

Although girls basketball is not always much of a hype in school, the student section has plans to support the girls through every moment. The excitement for school sports has risen significantly this year, and this increase should serve as motivation to play for the honor of the Spartans throughout the season.

Although its dedication shows in practice, if the team wants to be the best in the state, all of its strengths will have to be present during the conference, sectional and state tournaments.

Top: Savannah Buck (10) dodges past teammate as the guard attempts to her block her layup. Practices currently entail scrimmaging to practice game play. Left: Nicole Weaver (10) shoots a two-pointer above fellow player Josie Fisher (11). Despite Fisher's block, Weaver manages to complete her throw.

Years in Review

In 2010, **14** games were won in a row, setting a record for streak length in one season.

116-45 is the final result of their highest-scoring game overall.

The team won **21** games last season; the alhletes strive to improve past record and post-season performance.

Bowling team strives toward State

Players strive for successful season through dedication to sport, team spirit

BY ADAM SWIATKOWSKI
Writer

The bowling team is back at Westwood Lanes, focusing intently on lining up each shot to perfection.

"Bowling is a mental game, so it's about (your) attitude," Danyelle Baker (12) said. "If another player is down, you have to...maintain a positive attitude to help the team."

This season, the team has high expectations for what it can achieve, focusing on maintaining the group's high reputation.

"As a team, we are trying to get as far as we can in the postseason and possibly win sectionals or regionals," Brianna Cearbaugh (11) said. "We are ultimately trying to make it to state. My goal is to win sectionals and to get into the state finals (as an individual), along with other teammates."

Perhaps based on past success, players believe there is a chance to achieve their ambitious goals through success in the postseason and competeing at state.

"The girls went to state two years ago, and they have a chance to make it back to the state tournament again," Don Crandall, head coach, said. "The boys are hoping to make it out of regionals, which is tough to do with our competition."

All members of the team have picked spares as a focal point of their success.

"Anyone can go out and make a couple of strikes, but to make all of your spares as well is (impressive)," Crandall said.

Although bowling is geared towards the individual, the team aspect is still important to include as it helps build character and improve mental focus.

"When the younger bowlers get upset with how they are bowling, I just try to (support) them," Cearbaugh said. "They always have more chances to prove themselves, so it is fine if they make a mistake once or twice."

PHOTOS BY MEGAN BUTLER

Student bowler develops the important skill of throwing a spare at a team practice.

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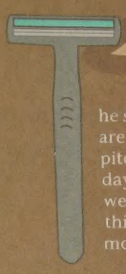
THE BRAVE DON'T SHAVE

Monthlong movement gains awareness through unconventional method

By Allie Nelson
Executive Editor



The season has arrived. Razors are stowed; shaving cream is pitched. Surprisingly, holiday preparation and chilly weather are not the only things characterizing the month of November.

An anticipated, yet equally thrilling, occurrence is celebrated. As the annual No-Shave November event grips the male, and sometimes female, population, skipping a part of the everyday routine is acceptable, maybe even suggested.

No-Shave November, or "Noshember," is a typical subject of conversation during the 30-day stint in autumn, as it gathers widespread attention and names involving alliteration and puns. Men flaunt their facial hair and compare their progress. Beards are simply expected.

"(Seeing people with beards) feels pretty good," Bert Scadina (12) said. "It makes me feel like I'm a part of something that's pretty cool."

For students, participating is a way to stand out. No-Shave November encourages trying something new and motivates students to be excited during a time when the weather is less permitting of outdoor leisure and activity begins to stagnate.

"The main reason (I partake) is because it's just another thing to have fun with and enjoy," Erik Elston (11) said. "It's one of those things that's fun to do with friends and you can see who can get the best no-shave."

Although skipping shaving appears to be just another activity to be involved in with friends, the reason behind the tradition is often forgotten. Since 2003, when the "Movember" foundation began, followed closely by introduction of the "No-Shave November" tradition, those involved strived to make a statement.

The goal, "to grow awareness by embracing our hair, which many cancer patients lose," according to no-shavenovember.com, is the primary reason for the existence of both organizations. Participants are encouraged to donate the funds normally spent on grooming supplies to research.

"I didn't know that (No-Shave November is) for men's cancer," Elston said. "It's exciting that I can represent women's cancer during football season (by wearing) pink and (represent) men's cancer in November."

The focus on breast cancer awareness and prevention in the last decade gained nationwide support as fundraisers and walks for the cure were sponsored by businesses and attended by people of all ages. Breast cancer's increased recognition, however, often overshadows other cancers. Prostate cancer is the most common type of cancer, with 238,000 cases expected in the upcoming year, according to cancer.gov. Still, the meaning behind not shaving often remains unclear to some.

No-Shave November attempts to recognize all male cancer and hopes to achieve the same support earned by breast cancer. As the two most frequent cancer types, prostate and breast cancer must continue to gather attention.

"Prostate cancer is just as bad as any cancer," Elston said. "No one wants (cancer) and it's tragic to have (it). You always hear about breast cancer but you never really hear of any men's cancers."

Despite its emphasis on male cancer, the event is not gender-specific. No-Shave November does not just apply to those able to foster their beards and mustaches. Exchanging the term with "Movember" can be misleading, as the month is not entirely dedicated to those who decide to skip the upper lip. Girls, too, can participate by not shaving their legs.

"I do it because all of the guys do it and they're like 'don't you dare' so I have to, of course," Sydney Yergler (11) said. "It grosses people out so I decided to do it again."

Sometimes, the commitment can feel extreme and temptation to erase all progress can occur.

"Its nice to get a break from shaving for a month, but it's also a pain because I have to wear pants every day," Yergler said. "Last year, the first basketball game I had to cheer at was in November and I had to shave then. This year I got a two week head start because there's another game around the twentieth."

With goals set, those involved know they can follow through if they really put their mind to it. Whether students attempt to surpass their results from previous years or achieve a certain look, their ambition will conquer the obstacles in their way.

"I have no (personal) goal because it's my first time," Elston said. "My goal is to possibly have the great beard of Kyle Mohsenzadeh (12) someday."

Despite the contrasting motives and differing levels of success, No-Shave November unites people against something beyond human control. Whether its a memorial or a "why not," the event makes November a month to remember. Until next year, beards.

> "Prostate cancer is just as bad as any cancer. No one wants (cancer) and it's tragic to have (it). You always hear about breast cancer but you never really hear of any men's cancers."
>
> **ERIK ELSTON (11)**
> *No Shave November Participant*

7,920
new cases of testicular cancer are expected to be diagnosed this year.

A man is **35%** more likely to be diagnosed with prostate cancer than a woman is to be diagnosed with breast cancer

One new case of prostate cancer occurs every **2.2 minutes**

A man dies from prostate cancer every **17.5 minutes**

370
will die from testicular cancer this year.

If detected and treated early, prostate cancer has a **97%** treatment success rate.

SOURCE: MOVEMBER.COM

MOVEMBER

Movember, a now well-known men's disease awareness program, began in 2003 with merely 30 members who were determined to promote male health. Now with over a million official participants, the organization continues to research and improve clinical treatment and tests for prostate and testicular cancer.

Match up the style of mustaches to their proper titles.

A.

B.

C.

D.

1. The Pencil 2. The Horseshoe 3. The Handlebar 4. The Chevron

Answers:
A.4, B.1, C.2, D.3

the SPARTANA

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▶NEWS SADD is putting on their annual 3 on 3 basketball tournament. Once again, the event is expected to draw a large crowd. **1**

▶OPINION In a battle for attention between the multiple extracurricular activities, the arts are often overshadowed and underappreciated. **3**

▶LIFE Students begin offering hugs each Friday, an event they've dubbed free hug Friday. The hope is that these hugs will bring joy to peers. **5**

▶SPORTS Athletes are beginning to commit to play their respective sport at the college level. Several athletes signed written commitments. **7**

▶FEATURE Students reflect on what it means to be a hero and who has met that definition in order to be considered a hero in their lives. **8**

Friday, December 6, 2013 | A 2009 Pacemaker Winner | Homestead High School's News Source Since 1969

MAKING THE GRADE

The final exam schedule is as follows:

Dec. 18	Periods 2, 5
Dec. 19	Periods 1, 3, 6
Dec. 20	Periods 4, 7

PHOTO BY REAGAN MIKESELL

Teachers prepare in wake of finals

By Aparna Chintapalli
Writer

As the first semester of the year winds down, the curriculum gradually condenses, students vigorously prepare to recall all of the information they have learned from their classes and impending semesterfinals draw near.

Students often associate feelings of anxiety, stress and apprehension with finals. Some breeze through their classes, as others work diligently to keep up their grades. Finals become the last chance for students to either raise their grades by consistently studying, or lower them by showing no concern.

"I want to show myself and my teachers that I have acquired the necessary knowledge to keep by grades up within their class," Grace Minnick (11) said. "Because I have put in the necessary effort to excel in each of my classes, I hope my finals reflect that."

Semester finals seem to always place a great burden on students as they study persistently and deadlines come to an end.

"I focus on most of the subjects that I struggle with," Dashaen Jordan (12) said. "During the semester, I take notes frequently and thoroughly. This usually helps for the most part, but I also make my own personal study guides and flashcards during the week of finals."

Though many students become

▶ SEE 'FINALS,' PAGE 2

PHOTO BY REAGAN MIKESELL

Two anticipated teams scrimmage against one another in order to prepare for the Dec. 6 basketball tournament.

IT TAKES 3

Basketball tournament to attract students

By Ian McKenzie
Copy Editor

Every school year, a staple of the changing seasons is a student body-wide sports tournament put on by Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD). For autumn, it's the SADD 3v3 Basketball Tournament, this year happening from 9:30-11:30 p.m. Dec. 6 at the Jorgensen YMCA. As one of the school's primary large-scale extracurricular events, the tournament attracts a sizeable portion of the student body with its promise of sports, food and fun while avoiding the typical pitfalls of unsupervised high school recreation.

Emphasizing ease of access for a safe night out with friends, the tournament is free to get into as long as participants and viewers are school students, provable with their photo identifications.

Students can officially enter the event at 9 p.m., the time the YMCA normally closes, up until the time access to the event officially closes off at 10 p.m. in an effort to keep things safe from a security perspective.

"Only current Homestead students are allowed," Stephanie Merkling, SADD sponsor, said. "It just makes security a lot easier to monitor (...) with the large volume of people that will be there. And this is only the second year we've done this, but the doors will close at 10 p.m. just to monitor exactly who is there."

If students would like to join

▶ SEE 'BASKETBALL,' PAGE 2

Austin Miller (12) guards the ball from a member of the opposing team during a scrimmage in preparation for the tournament.

"There are many (...) fun activities that teenagers can do besides partaking in **smoking** or drinking **alcohol**. SADD helps **open** up my eyes to these activities **every** year."

AUSTIN MILLER (12)
SADD Basketball Tournament Participant

Board passes bullying policy

By Megan Cater
Copy Editor

The School Board has passed a new bullying policy targeted at prevention and procedures taken toward bullying in the district.

"The policy was updated and approved in response to new legislation passed at the state level this past spring concerning bullying and how school districts are to define, assess and manage this concern," John Blum, school board president, said in an email.

Although bullying is always evident in and out of school, the new policy focuses on reporting, intervention, investigation and follow-up regarding students being bullied.

"In the spring, the state legislature passed a bullying law (...) that involved a new definition of bullying, new expectations for both prevention education as well as investigation and holding schools and students accountable to be sure that they are properly addressing bullying," Anita Gross, school social worker, said.

With today's media, bullying has transformed from verbal and physical abuse in person to digital harassment and embarrassment. Through Twitter and other social networking sites, the possibilities are endless as to who is targeted and how many people witness them being bullied.

▶20 percent of high school students in the United States are bullied.

SOURCE: WWW.STOPBULLYING.GOV

"Bullying has become a more publicly understood issue," Gross said. "Bullying has to be overt, unwanted and repeated. There has to be intent to do harm or embarrass another person and it has to also create a hostile environment under certain conditions."

School is supposed to be a safe place for

▶ SEE 'BULLYING POLICY,' PAGE 2

BRIEFS

SENIOR YEARBOOK PHOTOS
Any senior who wishes to have his/her picture printed in the yearbook must have their picture taken at Lifetouch Studios/Prestige by Dec. 6. Any student who does not have his/her photo taken by Prestige by this deadline will not be included in the 2013-14 school yearbook.

DRIVERS ED
The book portion of drivers ed classes are being held this winter. The class runs from Jan. 27 to March 3 with classes meeting several times per week. Each class meets from 6-8, and the cost is $125. Registration is to take place at 6:30 on the morning of Jan. 16 in the community room. Contact student services for any additional information.

PARENT NIGHT
Parents of students of the entering freshman class of 2018 are invited for a school visit at 6:30 on Jan. 15 in the freshman academy. This parent night will provide parents with information regarding the freshman academy, freshman scheduling, advanced placement and dual-credit courses and elective and extracurricular activities available.

CAP AND GOWN ORDER FORMS
Jostens will be in the cafeteria on Dec. 10 to collect all senior cap and gown order forms. All order forms should be placed on this date or before. If any student is in need of another order form, more can be found in student services.

COVENTRY AUTO WASH
Due to the unexpected closing of Coventry Auto Wash, those who have purchased car wash cards from athletes may bring the card to the Athletic Office in order to trade them in for two car washes from Mike's Car Wash.

Floor damage closes weight room

Weight room closed due to structural damage, 'hinders' athletic teams

PHOTO BY REAGAN MIKESELL

A hole in the floor of the upstairs weight room caused the school to close the room until further notice.

By Megan Read
Writer

The second-floor weight room facilities are currently closed for an indefinite period of time due to structural damage that developed into an unsafe environment for those using the weight room. Cracks in the concrete flooring formed from years of using heavy equipment.

According to Nick Ankenbruck, physical education and weight and strength teacher, the weight room had to be closed because of gradual deterioration within the room's foundation, not because of one accident or catastrophic incident.

"The foundation of the weight room floor underneath the power stations weakened causing the concrete to be damaged," Ankenbruck said.

The weight room was closed on Nov. 12 as soon as the damage was discovered, and arrangements were made to have all of the equipment moved by the football team to the NGAP in the old Woodside cafeteria located next to the book storage room in the freshman academy.

Although the weight room is not currently available for use, other facilities in the second level of the gym, like the wrestling and the aerobics rooms, are still fully functional.

The weight room has traditionally been used primarily by athletic and physical education programs. However, the weight room has also been used by students and faculty.

The damage to the weight room as forced the school to close the doors of the room to everyone who had previously used it. As of now, the weight room is off limits to everyone unless given prior permission to enter.

Some think that the problem with the weight room lies not in an engineering error but in the location. The weight room is located on the second floor above the gymnasium, a decision which some believe played a large part in causing the extensive damage.

"The fiasco with the weight room has been fated to happen since they designed the school and decided to put the weight room on the second floor," Tristan

▶ SEE 'WEIGHT ROOM,' PAGE 2

AP teachers to remain with classes

New policy calls to keep AP students with current teachers at semester change

By Katie Dunlap
News Editor

The schedules of students in several AP classes could change to keep students with the same teacher for both semesters of the 2013-14 school year. A select few AP classes, such as AP US History, AP Literature and AP Composition will be impacted, because they have multiple teachers for the same class.

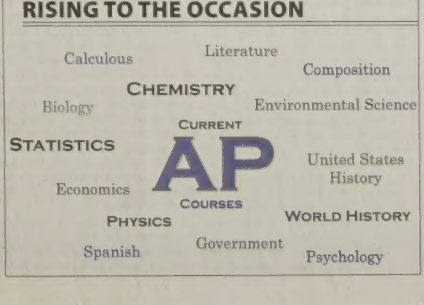
"Typically AP classes are with the same teacher because often it's just one section, so there isn't a choice," Jerry Anderson, head of the guidance department, said. "We looked at some of the AP sections now that (have several sections of the class). We thought it was best to look at it to see if we could keep them with the same teacher."

Not all students in AP classes will notice a change in their schedule. While trying to keep students with the same teachers, counselors could not alter all schedules, and they only altered the AP classes with multiple teachers. Other factors such as higher ed impacted whether or not a change could be facilitated.

"(Schedule changes) won't happen in all cases," Anderson

▶ SEE 'AP TEACHERS,' PAGE 2

RISING TO THE OCCASION



▶FINALS CONTINUED FROM 1

pressured and anxious about their grades and the status of their grade-point average, they fail to realize the significant role that teachers play during class finals.

Many students contend that teachers are very relaxed during finals, and their only priority is to get scantrons graded on time. Teachers, however, play an integral part in preparing their students throughout the semester by instilling in them the necessary knowledge and skills needed to excel.

Final exams serve the purpose of testing the level of knowledge students attain during their courses.

"Ideally, final exams should be, in many instances, a comprehensive examination of everything you have learned in the course in terms of the knowledge and skills you are supposed to acquire," David Price, English literature teacher, said.

> "A good final exam gives opportunities for students to earn partial credit because it is difficult to cover material from an entire semester."
>
> **MADDY KLEIN (11)**
> *Student*

"Tests that have essay portions, especially in the humanities, allow students to demonstrate their analytical skills. However, these types of tests would require a certain degree of time and space, and I am not privy to that."

Because each respective course encompasses different skills, students are required to exhibit their knowledge in a wide range of subjects. Many final exams, however, are objective tests that focus on one direct answer. These types of tests are applicable to math and history tests, but other subjects are prone to testing guided by argumentation, interpretation and questioning.

"I think good final exams have opportunities for both subjective and objective questions," said Maddy Klein (11). "These tests should determine whether or not the student knows the material, but should leave some room for argumentation. A good final exam gives opportunities for students to earn partial credit because it is difficult to cover material from an entire semester."

As semester finals draw near, students are also piled with extra credit opportunities, make up tests, missing assignments and deadlines to account for. Anxiety and pressure spreads, and students of all grades are susceptible to their teachers' expectations.

"My feelings about semester finals have changed throughout my high school career," Jordan said. "As a freshman, I wasn't sure about how the week was going to turn out. The schedule was confusing and I was definitely more anxious about everything. But now, as a senior, I am definitely more relaxed and laid back about my expectations."

HOMESTEAD DEBUNKED

Myth: Former teacher Sam Van Horn quit his job to be a screen writer in Hollywood, California.

Status: True - The idea of a previous teacher moving to Hollywood, CA to be a screen writer may almost sound fictional. Rumors are that Sam Van Horn, former social studies teacher, moved away to be a screen writer.

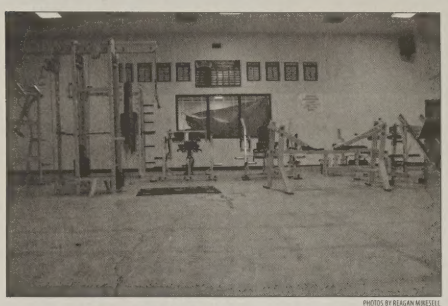
"Mr. Van Horn did in fact move to Hollywood in California to be a screen writer," Tom Maher, social studies teacher, said. "Mr. Van Horn loved (the school), but his dreams were always to be a screen writer."

It is true that Van Horn left Indiana for a new start and is living his dream. Many students have wondered what happened to Van Horn after he did not return as a teacher this school year. Van Horn made the decision to move on in order to pursue his dreams.

"Sam knows a couple friends out there that are in the film industry and they came to him with the opportunity to become a screen writer; they said that he could stay with him while he got his feet on the ground so he took the opportunity," Maher said.

Van Horn's departure left an impact on students and the social studies department alike.

--Janay Alberts



PHOTOS BY REAGAN MIKESELL

Above: The weight room now sits vacant as the majority of the weights and equipment has been moved to the freshman academy while the room is unusable.
Right: One theory of how the large crack in the concrete came to be is because of the heavy weights that are used during weight and strength classes and training.

▶WEIGHT ROOM CONTINUED FROM 1

Phillips (12) said. "Even if they had reinforced the floor correctly, the end result would have been the same. The weight room's new location is better and it just makes sense."

As a member of the football team, Phillips is very familiar with the weight room. Along with football, many winter and spring athletic teams use the weight room on a regular basis for off-season conditioning, so it was expected the damage to the weight room would hinder the teams' ability to train on campus. However, according to Katelyn Gutwein (12), a member of the swim team, not all teams have been impacted.

"The incident hasn't really affected our practice schedule. Right after they found the crack in the floor, we had one dry-land cancelled," Gutwein said.

The team simply moved their dry-land practices, during which the swim team does not practice at the district's natatorium at Summit, with the equipment to the academy's cafeteria. Ankenbruck's weight and strength classes are also meeting here, along with many other athletic teams.

For those students who are unable to use the weights that are currently located in the freshmen academy, other exercise facilities around the community are a good alternative. Places like the YMCA and Planet Fitness contain athletics equipment and are open for use, however, they do require a membership in order to enter.

Currently it is undetermined what future plans for the weight room will be. Engineering and cost estimates are under way, but until such plans are finalized the upstairs weight room will remain closed and off limits to students, faculty and the public alike.

▶BASKETBALL CONTINUED FROM 1

the event, they should visit the "SADD_3v3_Basketball" page on My Big Campus, a new feature added this year in an effort to clean up and expedite the registration process. When signing up for the event, students are committing to a bracket potentially larger than last year with the flexibility to grow with enough student interest.

"We are currently planning on a 36 team bracket, however this number can be increased if time permits," Tayyaba Qureshi, SADD sponsor, said.

As far as planning the event goes, the club must begin preparation months in advance to cleanly pull off a night with many different moving pieces.

"(It takes) at least two and a half months," Merkling said. "We have been bouncing this around since the beginning of October (...) It takes a lot of resources to get something like this together."

In terms of attendance, the basketball tournament doesn't quite match the dodgeball night, but still draws nearly 10% of the student body.

"(It is our) second largest (event)," Merkling said. "Typically dodgeball is bigger than basketball, but (the 3v3 tournament) definitely pulls out close to 200 people, at least it did last year."

All participants, Austin Miller (12) included, view the night as an opportunity to get out and have fun while avoiding traditional high school peer pressure.

"There are many other fun activities that teenagers can do besides partaking in smoking (marijuana) or drinking alcohol," Miller said. "SADD helps open up my eyes to these activities every year, especially with the basketball and dodgeball tournaments."

In respect to the success of these two tournaments, the club is always looking for avenues to pique student body interest, even in smaller scale settings.

"We do have a game night," Merkling said. "It's not nearly to the volume that these competitions are, but that's kind of our third event."

As a means to deliver the mission of SADD as an organization, Merkling echoes Miller when speaking of the opportunity the night presents.

"(Specifically), we portray our message through (...) a raffle that we have where you can read through a lot of statistics regarding drug and alcohol use, and then you can fill out this questionnaire and there is an opportunity for gift cards you can win," Merkling said. "We do try to announce throughout the evening (to the students) why they are there (...) which is to have a good time while making good choices."

THE FINAL COUNTDOWN

200 anticipated students in attendance

36 basketball teams to compete

1 proclaimed winner

▶BULLYING POLICY CONTINUED FROM 1

students to get an education, but when bullying is going on, students do not feel safe being themselves.

"I think the more we combat (bullying), the more we're promoting positive things, education increases," Tiffany Ham, FACS teacher, said. "You can't learn anything if you don't feel safe. When I was a kid, I was bullied so badly that I had to change schools. When you feel like everyone is after you and you don't feel like there is a safe place, school can be a nightmare for some people."

Students discussed bullying and ways to prevent it in advisory.

"Personally I believe with all my heart that when people have high self-esteem they build others up," Ham said. "When people have low self-esteem they pull people down. I want to live around positivity. I think there are certain people that are picked on because they are different. I think people are always scared of (what's) unfamiliar."

> "I think the more we combat (bullying), the more we're promoting positive things, education increases. You can't learn anything if you don't feel safe."
>
> **TIFFANY HAM**
> *FACS Teacher*

Throughout the country there have been different cases regarding students who were bullied that became violent toward classmates or themselves.

"I don't think anything should be taken lightly," Ham said. "You never know what may send someone over the edge."

The new bullying policy was revised on Nov. 19.

"(The policy) doesn't really change what bullying is, it just makes it more clear and specific of how the state is defining it and when schools can and can't get involved," Gross said.

Through the new bullying policy and the steps of prevention the district is taking, bullying is hoped to become a rare occurrence.

"Bullying causes long term mental, social and physical problems for the victim," Khamsay Panngasiri (12) said. "There is no need to hurt someone else just to make yourself feel better."

▶AP TEACHERS CONTINUED FROM 1

said. "It depends, many kids are taking several APs so you can't really move the schedule around. All counselors are looking at that to tweak it to see if we can keep them with the same teachers."

Keeping students with the same AP teachers is not necessarily imperative, though it does help with data tracking for the classes.

"I think it's our goal (to keep students with the same teachers)," Anderson said. "When you're talking AP classes, it benefits the students to stay with the same teacher. They become accustomed to their learning style and the fast paced, fully-filled day each time that they are in class. We thought it would be best that they stayed with the same students."

The only classes affected are selected AP classes. None of the normal, dual-credit or honors classes will be changed. Students will not be able to request a change in their schedules in order to get a specific teacher.

"When you go to university level, you change teachers or professors every semester," Park Ginder, principal, said. "It's not a bad thing for us to be challenged and taught by different people to learn different styles and approaches, different questioning techniques and those sorts of things."

By keeping students with the same teacher both semesters, the transition period for both students and teachers adjusting to new classes in the second semester of the school year will be limited.

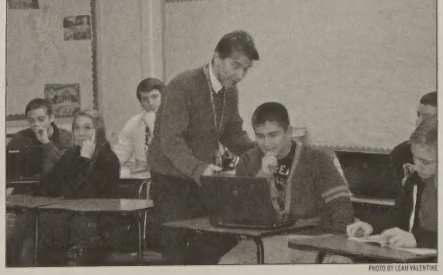


PHOTO BY LEAH VALENTINE

AP English literature teacher, Dr. David Price, leans over student Ben Lutz (11) while assisting him with an assignment on the computer.

"I think most teachers enjoy it, and it's a good thing because you get to keep running with the (students) you already have and you understand them and know them and you have some advantages that weigh from a teacher standpoint," Ginder said. "I think there are teachers too that like a change. It varies (depending on the teacher)."

Even if students would like to change teachers for their AP class in the second semester, altering schedules to avoid getting a particular teacher will not be allowed.

"It is important for students to be exposed to a variety of teaching styles, but sometimes the transition between teachers can be difficult if the teachers aren't following the same schedule or have different expectations for their students," Sydney Yergler (11) said.

While not all schedules could be changed this year, the goal for next year is to keep as many AP students with the same teachers as they can.

"I think for next year, we are going to try to make certain that we accomplish (keeping students with teachers) as much as possible," Anderson said.

the SPARTANA
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Staff members support the First Amendment in its entirety and oppose censorship in any form. The content of the paper is determined by the student staff. In cases of potentially controversial material, the Editorial Board will meet to decide the content of the newspaper. The staff will be assisted by the adviser in areas of professional ethics and legalities.

Material that is libelous or obscene as defined by Fort Wayne Newspapers or could cause a substantial and material disruption of the school day as defined by the Supreme Court will not be printed.

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Public input will be accepted from the Homestead community in the form of letters to the editor. Letters must follow standards concerning libel or obscenity. Those that could cause a substantial and material disruption to the school day will not be printed. Letters can be e-mailed to The Spartana at thespartana@gmail.com.

OPINION

PHOTO BY MEGAN BUTLER

Obama's 'pacifying' apology nothing but empty words over unfulfilled promises

By Kylie Poling
Opinion Editor

In the face of all the blunders associated with the initiation of the Affordable Care Act and its enrollment website, President Obama held a press conference on Nov. 14. In his speech he addressed concerns related to the ACA. Despite his attempts to pacify the public, the President really offered nothing of substance to say to Americans. His words were empty and meaningless, offering no real solution to the problems that have arisen with the implementation of the national health care program. In its inaugural month, a mere 100,000 Americans successfully enrolled in ObamaCare, roughly one-fifth of the expected enrollment projected by federal officials, according to CNBC.com..

"Is that as high a number as we'd like? Absolutely not," Obama said.. "But it does mean that people want affordable health care."

Of course people want affordable health care. Spending less on health insurance allows for more flexibility in other spending habits. The shockingly low number of enrollees goes to show that people want affordable health care, but they have not found value in any plans the ACA offers. The root of the matter here is some people need more coverage than others, meaning some will pay more than others. In accordance with this principle, health care should be individualized. We are people, not statistics and, as such, deserve to have a healthcare plan that is catered specifically to each of us, not some big-shot government plan that's the same for everybody. There are the different tiers of coverage within the ACA, but they are not customized to people. The ACA has taken away the human factor. It has streamlined Americans into possibilities and what-if's, and that is a direct product of nationalized, federal-run health care.

> "We are people, not statistics and, as such, deserve to have a healthcare plan that is catered specifically to each of us, not some big-shot government plan that's the same for everybody."
>
> **KYLIE POLING**

All of this is beside the fact our nation's leading Democrats–including the President–lied.

Obama repeatedly said if Americans liked their plans they could keep them. What he didn't say was insurance companies would close their doors and completely cancel providing their services. Why should my family choose to get health insurance from the people who blatantly lied to us just a few months ago? Representative Nancy Pelosi is one such liar.

"Did I ever tell my constituents that if they liked their plan they could keep it?" Pelosi said. "I would have if I'd ever met anybody who liked his or her plan. But that was not my experience."

However, Pelosi's website stated: "Keep your doctor, and your current plan, if you like them." This is in addition to her "If you like what you have, you can keep it," back in 2009.

"I completely get how upsetting this can be for a lot of Americans, particularly after assurances they heard from me that if they had a plan that they liked they could keep it," Obama said. "I said that I would do everything we can to fix this problem. And today I'm offering an idea that will help do it."

Despite Obama's assurances, he offers no remedial measure. He says he'll "work as hard as he can," but never actually offers any sort of resolution to any issues he addressed in his speech. I am tired of hearing these empty promises and the way our nation's leaders answers questions without really saying much of anything at all. Americans deserve to have clear answers from our government, not convoluted words that are, pragmatically, nothing but a waste of time.

twitter take

The Spartana attempts to capture the most impulsive responses on Twitter.

Question: "What would be the ideal way to be asked to Semi-formal?"

@jcbdvs - Jacob Davis (9) ▶ "Spelled out in Triscuits on my floor as I walk in."

@Karlyhorse - Karly Bailey (12) ▶ "Not to be asked. #not bitter"

@18NickAnderson - Nick Anderson (11) ▶ "To pay me to go."

@yo_GABY_gabba - Gaby Meissner (10) ▶ "With Starbucks, white girl or not it wins everyone over."

@theAlexMaher - Alex Maher (10) ▶ "Unless you're Justin Timberlake, Adam Levine or Zac Efron, don't even bother asking."

More students work Black Friday

Need for employees expands teen work schedules into morning hours

By Katie Maher
Writer

There is one day out of the entire year where approximately 152 million Americans scramble out at ridiculously early hours in order to buy the year's hottest items with ridiculously low price tags, and all of the madness that comes with these Black Friday sales is an all-hands-on-deck task; even high school employees have to participate.

With the hours of these sales inching earlier and earlier every year, some will begin to wonder whether it is fair to pull teens out of homes to work on what is now becoming both Thanksgiving and Black Friday.

This year, Wal-Mart opened the doors for Black Friday sales at 8 p.m. on Thanksgiving, which most people argued to be too early. In that case, high school students should not be forced to work; it is still Thanksgiving, and employees deserve the time to be with their family.

Instead of students having to beg or argue with their managers to have the time that is still Thanksgiving off, there should be regulations for under-18 personnel. Around 12 a.m., when it can actually be called Black Friday, is when student employees should be required to work.

Like most employees, high schoolers do not want to be working on Black Friday at all, but it needs to be remembered that working on the biggest shopping day of the year is just part of the job when working in retail. There cannot be a shortage of workers; a shortage of workers can spark just as much outrage as a shortage of iPod's.

After a 2010 strike of Wal-Mart workers refusing to attend what can be considered the most stressful work day of the year, many chain stores including Best Buy and Target actually offer their Black Friday employees a boost in their paycheck and additional benefits for working off-hours, almost as a reward for putting up with parents socking each other for the last Tickle-Me-Elmo. Sure, the hours are pretty strenuous and are bound to cause headaches, but at least there is something in return for workers instead of nothing like in earlier years.

Even if a teen employee was able to avoid the Black Friday insanity this past year, there is a good chance that he or she will sometime in life have to deal with the big day, and these early years are good practice.

The earlier and earlier hours should stop, but teens working should not complain because whether that team be Target, American Eagle or even PetSmart it is only one day of the 365 days of the year, and having a job during this time of the year can be hard to come by. Not to mention, stories they come back with can be priceless.

Emily Sery (11) serves a customer during her eight-hour shift at DeBrand's on Black Friday. This was Sery's busiest shift ever experienced so far in her time of employment at the chocolate shop, which is surrounded by additional retail stores at Jefferson Pointe.

PHOTO BY WILLIAM HU

CARTOON BY EMILY SPITT

Appreciation of arts inadequate

Despite long-term achievement, department lacks deserved recognition

By Colby Shoup
Writer

Although schools are no longer severely hurting from the drastic budget cuts in the arts departments that plagued the 2011 and 2012 school years, the arts programs at this school, with the exception of marching band, are still struggling to get the same recognition and respect given to sports programs. This cannot be proven by statistics, but it's obvious just from how much of the morning announcements are spent congratulating sports teams, the attendance at football games compared to school plays and what seems to be the general attitude of the student body when it comes to the arts.

I can tell you as someone who has been involved in the arts that what we have here at this school is truly special and it deserves to be talked about and supported. But don't take my word for it, ask any student in show choir, art class or theater, and there's a good chance that the arts have had a positive impact on their life.

I think everyone in this school should know we have something like this, because the more people that know about it, the better.

Who knows, maybe all anyone feeling depressed in this school needs is a paintbrush or a spotlight, and a little bit of love from their peers.

Studies have shown that being involved in the perfect extracurricular activity (artistic or otherwise) improves a student's grades and dedication to schoolwork. Just ask Class Royale show choir member Sean Low (12).

"I would probably be a lot more depressed (not being involved in the arts), show choir and theater provide a positive atmosphere for me in that I feel welcome and appreciated for my talents" Low said.

All it would take is a few words on the announcements once in a while or a pep rally for the arts planned with the same amount of enthusiasm the pep rallies for sports are to tell students and teachers involved in the arts that what they do is appreciated. Really, this is the least we can do for a program that has touched so many lives in a positive way. One of these lives is Ella Mckane-Wright's (10).

"(The school) should show the arts off as a way to tell an amazing story. There is something for everyone," Wright said. "Everyone has a story to tell through their art, music, or monologues."

Grading scale harmful to applicants

Standards harms GPAs, differs from those of academically comparable schools

The school's grading scale, while falling in line with Homestead's reputation of rigorous academics, is currently more difficult than neighboring competitive schools. According to Carmel High School's student handbook, the grading scale is significantly more lenient than that of Homestead. Although Carmel students do not have the opportunity of receiving the grade of "A+", the range of scores making students eligible for an "A" runs from 93 to 100% as opposed to Homestead's 95-97%. This gap between the two scales becomes much more significant at the opposite end of the scale; the grade considered an "F" at Carmel is 59%, whereas the failing grade at Homestead is 64%.

The discrepancy in academic rigor between the two schools only places Homestead students at a disadvantage. For seniors applying to college, the GPA associated with a straight "A" student from Homestead will appear equal to that of a straight "A" student from a district with an easier grading scale. The GPAs of the two students will appear equal despite the Homestead student earning the higher GPA percentage wise. At the level of competition that occurs during college admissions, this inequality is more than an unfair advantage for other students; it's an unfair disadvantage for Homestead students.

Beyond college admissions, students struggling with failing grades face difficulty with the current grading scale. Every cut-off is suddenly more difficult to obtain. This includes academic honors requirements, and even graduation requirements. Students who are unable to meet the necessary requirements for awards, scholarships and diplomas at Homestead may be eligible at other schools. With the demanding classes already offered at Homestead, an unforgiving grading scale only makes success all the more difficult.

While some school districts, such as Fort Wayne Community Schools, have a grading scale even more difficult than that of Homestead, the academics at Homestead are rigorous to a degree that most schools with such difficult grading scales do not compare. Schools with academics comparable to those of Homestead, such as Carmel, provide a more accurate model, a model that, if followed, would not only benefit Homestead's students, but also the school and its reputation in its entirety.

By adopting an easier grading scale, Homestead could potentially increase the graduation rate as well as the number of students who receive an academic honors diploma. This increase would extend the school's reputation of strong academics and in turn expand enrollment. The current grading scale offers students and administration no advantage in intrastate academic competition. An improved grading scale would at least open up the path to the possibility of success.

THE ED BOARD

Priscilla Lin *Jessica Tebben*
William Ngo *Katie Dunlap*
Allie Nelson *Kylie Poling*
Haiden Steingass *Megan Cater*

{The Bottom Line} *Although some see the scoring system as motivation to excel, the rigorous curriculum makes class success difficult to achieve.*

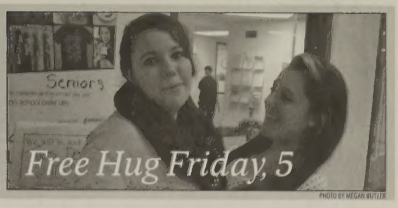


PHOTO BY MEGAN BUTLER

'Doctor Who' captivates diverse audience

Television show attraction sparks fandom among watchers, offers variety to promote influence

By Mallory McCauley
Writer

As the Doctor has twisted and turned through space in "Doctor Who," he has captured fans' hearts along the way. From the first doctor, William Hartnell, to the twelfth doctor, Peter Capaldi, 50 years later, BBC America's "Doctor Who" has been drawing in fans to its ever-growing fandom. The Doctor Who 50th anniversary special aired on Nov. 23 featured a new "Dr. Who" played by Capaldi.

"Doctor Who" features a man, called The Doctor, who travels through time and space in a T.A.R.D.I.S (Time and Relative Dimension in Space), which has the appearance of an old-school phone booth, and who prevents cataclysmic events and essentially saves the entire universe in every episode that airs. The driving force behind the continuation of this show is that every so often, The Doctor will die; however, he rejuvenates with a new appearance and is therefore played by a different actor after each death. The death and "rejuvenation" of The Doctor occurs about every two seasons.

"('Doctor Who' is) a story that for 50 years hasn't been replaced or replicated in the same fashion," Dakota Burks (10) said. "(The show is) just completely unique."

"Doctor Who" originally began in 1963. In 1989, this original airing of the traditional "Doctor Who" came to an end and made a reappearance in 1996 with another break until 2005. It was in the first season of its return in 2005 that the show truly began to form a fan base with David Tennant portraying The Doctor accompanied by Rose. These two, without a doubt, successfully gained viewer's hearts and attention.

"The variety of genres can appeal to just about everyone," Drake White (11) said. "It covers romance, sci-fi, drama, but doesn't delve too deep in one or another."

Most "Doctor Who" fans suggest watching the show starting with the ninth season, which began in 2005, because that is where the plot appears to really pick up. Between this airing in 2005 and the upcoming doctor, there hasn't been any prolonged off-air time, leaving all fans in anticipation.

> "The variety of genres can appeal to just about everyone. It covers romance, sci-fi, drama, but doesn't delve too deep in one or another."
>
> **DRAKE WHITE (11)**
> *'Doctor Who' Enthusiast*

"The best episodes start with David Tennant and just get better from there," Tori Wrobleski (10) said.

The name "Doctor Who" may sound a bit ridiculous for the title of a television series, but it depicts the underlying mystery of the entire show superbly. Viewers have yet to discover what The Doctor's first name is – "the word that began it all".

"Doctor Who" has successfully wrapped fans into its grips as viewers wait in anticipation of every new episode and season. This has essentially created an entire "Doctor Who" fandom of all of those who love the show.

"Overall, ('Doctor Who') is an amazing show and it's super addicting," Wrobleski said. "The Doctor is my favorite."

The 50th anniversary special that aired Nov. 23 previewed the season to come and got its fandom squirming with anticipation for the new episodes all over again.

"I thought (the fiftieth special) was fantastic," Burks said. "They incorporated the past doctors leading up to now and even to the upcoming twelfth."

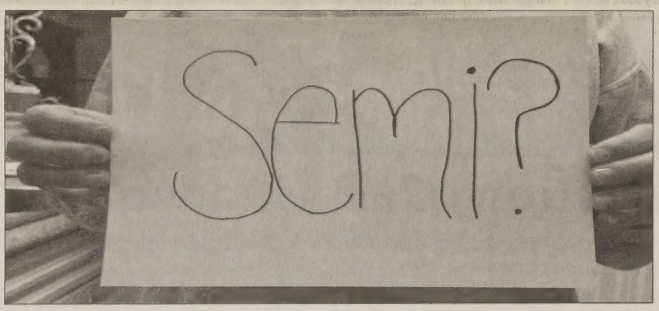
Renowned British actor Peter Capaldi will be playing the leading role of the thirteenth doctor in the upcoming season. Capaldi is an Oscar winner and played in widely acclaimed movies such as World War Z.

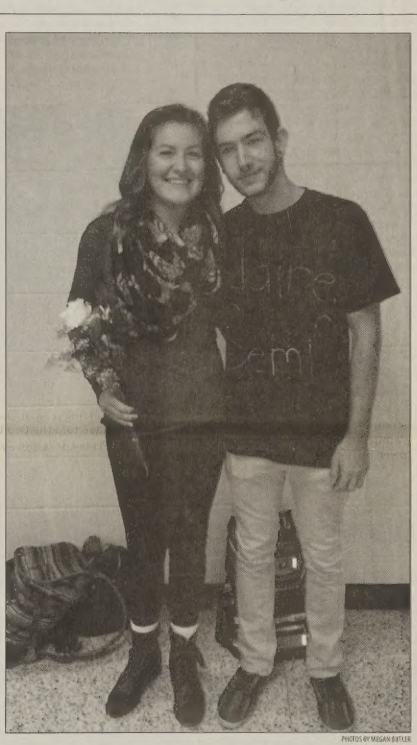
This television series has expanded beyond the boundaries of the TV, and has flooded book stores with comics, clothing stores with "Doctor Who" shirts and even the kitchen with "Doctor Who" mugs. The fandom seems to be ever growing.

"('Doctor Who') is about every genre blended in one and has infinitesimal possibilities with where it could go," White said.

Chance to Dance

Students creatively invite dates to accompany them to Semi-formal dance





PHOTOS BY MEGAN BUTLER

By Awbrei Vachon
Writer

It is that time of the year again: time to dance the night away and, more importantly, time to foster that creative side and invite a date to the annual Semi-Formal dance.

This year, students prepare for "A Midnight Voyage" by taking all the proper precautions by purchasing a ticket, picking out the perfect outfit and asking that special someone to accompany them on the upcoming "night out on the water."

It is not just a matter of asking for most students, however. It is about figuring out a clever way to express one's affection and appreciation for the other person.

For Phillip Thain (11), asking Erin Carlstrom (11) to Semi this year was not only witty, but also a bit suspenseful as well.

"I got a group of friends together and after school one day I had them surround me (while) I was lying on the ground, (and) I had one of my friends go and get Erin and (say), 'there's something wrong with Phillip you have to come see,'" Thain said. "So Erin came up, and she was a little nervous I think because she thought something was wrong with me, and then she saw me and saw the sign that said 'I'm dying to go to Semi with you.'"

At first a little angry at Thain's unexpected pun, Carlstrom was soon able to breathe again and became increasingly impressed by the effort.

"She kneeled down and well, she kissed me, so that was cool," Thain said.

Thain is not the only innovative student though; Kolin Behrens (10) had another creative way of asking someone to the dance.

"I bought one of the (Wat-ahh! bottles) and I basically got the label online and I totally redid it so that it said "Semi," and then it had her name on it," Behrens said. "I (also) put some flowers through the top of it so it was sort of customized, (and I) gave her some chocolate-covered strawberries with that."

Even though Behrens and Caitlyn Nycum (10) are actually going more as friends, that does not mean the two are not anticipating a fantastic time.

"She told me that she would absolutely go with me, (which) made me feel really good," Behrens said.

But wait, it gets better. Christina Jesse (11) stepped up her Semi-Formal asking tactics. "I'm dating a kid in my grade named Drew Atkinson (11) and he was going to ask me, (but) I thought, you know why should guys have to have the obligation to ask the girl to Semi? So I put the cups in the fence and spelled out "Drew – Semi?" Jesse said.

Jesse, along with most of the people who have ever driven by the school, has seen the motivational cup-signs on the baseball diamond fence, and despite Atkinson's timid personality, Jesse thought the public asking would be a nice change. How a person comes up with these ideas, though, is a rather good inquiry.

"Honestly, I had a dream about (the idea)," Jesse said. "I just woke up and I was like, 'hmm, that would be really interesting.'"

So whether the idea is sparked in a foreboding dream, or if it just comes from the depths of one's imagination, the thought and effort goes a long way, and it creates enthusiasm for the special night.

"I'm looking forward to just hanging out with my friends and having a good time with Erin and enjoying the night with her," Thain said.

Bottom left: Semi-formal asker holds sign with abbreviated term for event to invite a date. Top left: Ben Schwartz (11) asks Sophie Tsiguloff (11) to the dance by sketching "Semi?" on the driveway in chalk. Above right: Michael Delzoppo (11) wears a shirt to invite Claire Costello (10) to accompany him to the dance.

Movie ideas drawn from fictional book series

Novels from young adult section transformed into realistic interpretations, dominate theater show times

By Sarah Camino
Writer

The recent release of "Catching Fire" as the next installment in "The Hunger Games" franchise highlighted the growing popularity of young adult book series and their subsequent adaptations into major motion pictures.

The hype surrounding some franchises, augmented by social media, has led to a popularity in midnight premieres on the opening night. Even late on a Thursday, these viewing extravaganzas are well-attended by students.

"I thought it was so fun to go out super late on Thursday and see ("Catching Fire")," Alyssa Wendlandt (10) said. "Because it was one of the first showings, no one had an opportunity to spoil it for me. There were a lot of crazy costumes there too, and it was really cool to see all of the really crazy, creative things that were going on."

Due to the enthusiasm of fans, series such as the Hunger Games have received quite the treatment from Hollywood. In particular, dystopian stories have attracted attention.

"I've always liked reading about things that could happen, but haven't happened yet," Madison Yenser (12) said. "It's always possible for there to be a tyrannical government, but (our generation) just hasn't seen it happen yet."

Others cite the relatable coming-of-age themes and heart-racing drama as the reason for these stories' success.

"One reason I became hooked (on the 'Hunger Games') is because it appealed to all aspects of my interests," Wendlandt said. "It has the action, it has the romance and it's a little cynical. It's very appealing to a wide range of people."

Students have also become attached to some characters, and seeing them portrayed on the big screen is one of many highlights of a film adaptation.

"I'm so excited to see Four (from Divergent, which is released in February) on screen," Brie Bramel (11) said. "When you read, you picture a character acting and looking a certain way, but if that's not how the actor is, then it doesn't make the movie seem real to the fans."

Although it is universally acknowledged that casting plays a huge role in the success of any film, the importance of the correct actor in a popular franchise can be critical to a devoted fan base.

"Whoever plays the lead is a deciding factor in how close the movie is to the book," Yenser said. "And I get extremely infuriated when a movie strays too far away from the book."

Adapting a 400 to 500 page book into a two hour movie is an arduous endeavor; admittedly, some things must be changed to avoid the plot seeming clunky and to maintain a fast-paced narrative for a wider viewing audience.

Yet, it is still possible for devout fans and casual viewers to be satisfied.

"('Catching Fire') was totally different to what I had in my mind when I read the book, but yet somehow the same," Wendlandt said. "I originally read the books because I thought, if they're going to make a movie, I might as well. Then, I finished the whole series in a week because it was a really interesting story line no one had ever really done before. I'm so happy ("Catching Fire") was really well converted, and I'd say it's probably my favorite movie right now."

PHOTO BY LEAH VALENTINE

Teen reader browses through the most popular novels for young adults, which primarily depicts life within dystopian environments.

Technology creates barriers between different generations

JESS SAYIN'

JESSICA TEBBEN
Life Editor

To you and me, technology is an unconventional gem, a controversial hidden treasure of sorts, never to be shared with adults because, well, they just don't understand. As technology advances, moms and dads, grandparents and aunts and uncles alike find themselves floundering in a sea of difficult-to-handle smart phones and pain-inducing computer problems. Luckily, most adults have somewhere to go for all the help they need but don't want: teenagers.

One thing all of us teenagers have over our elders is our vast knowledge of computers. We know why the screen is blinking, why the sound on our iPhones won't play and how to make a PowerPoint presentation without throwing our laptops out the window. We know how to burn CDs for our friends and we know how to get around all the rules of the internet. None of these things were learned, of course, because we are the first generation to grow up online. Our parents didn't have the luxuries of Wikipedia and Google, so we had to teach ourselves how to efficiently use the internet.

Being a part of a highly technological era has allowed teenagers to adapt to major advancements well. When we get a new cell phone, we use it the first day like we've had it our entire lives. However, our parents have to adapt just as we do. The difference is, it takes them at least a month to figure out a cell phone while it took us minutes to conquer.

I guess what I'm trying to say here is adults are having some trouble with the internet and with their cell phones, and we need to be a steady support system in order for them to be technologically sound and savvy eighty-year-olds. Their relentless how-do-you-do-this questioning may get annoying, but it's our job to help them out. With your help, adults everywhere will stop being so anxious about getting on the computer.

Some adults might be bitter about the plethora of technology which we now have at our fingertips. They didn't have Google or Yahoo! to help them with their English essays, so why should we? If there is a technologically bitter adult in your life, remind them not to dwell on the past. Tell them, "The future looks bright and you have to take hold of it in order to achieve internet success."

Other adults, however, may have an opposite viewpoint than the aforementioned technologically bitter. Eager to immerse themselves in the true beauty of the World Wide Web, some adults are relentless with pestering you to teach them everything you know. In this case, encourage them and praise them for their enthusiasm, but tell them to slow down because you have a busy life, too.

Once you find time to teach the adults in your life the wonders of the internet, from the difference between .com and .gov to the way you transfer music from a laptop to a smartphone, sit down with them and be patient.

The key to teaching adults about the internet is to go step-by-step and very slowly. Talk to them like they speak a foreign language, like they do to you sometimes when they're trying to teach you how to do math or how to make lasagna. Do not roll your eyes when they ask questions with obvious answers like "If I close out of this tab, will the other one stay open?" and "Why is the screen on my phone black?" (It's because your phone is off, mom.)

Instead of getting flustered or frustrated, take a deep breath and explain how to open a new tab in the simplest language possible. Of course, they're going to ask more questions about how to close said tab and how group messages work. Work through it with them. Take one week to talk about the domain names and the next to talk about taking pictures with the webcam.

Basically, teaching adults how to use the internet is exactly the same as teaching a toddler how to read "Goodnight Moon." Don't go too fast, explain everything in primitive language and point at a lot of things.

> "The key to teaching adults about the internet is to go step-by-step and very slowly."
>
> **JESSICA TEBBEN**

Soon enough, your adult pupils will become their own little version of a tech-savvy person. Of course, they'll still only know how to play spider solitaire on their phones and use Microsoft Office Word on their computers, while you know how to open an incognito tab and run a dumb blog, which is not necessarily taking advantage of the World Wide Web but coming pretty close.

After your tech 101 class with your adults, they will suddenly become the internet know-it-all who you once were. "I'll bet you didn't know that you can FaceTime on the iPhone," they'll say.

And you'll say that, "Yes, mom, I did know." They'll accuse you of lying and you'll roll your eyes as your insides fill with the regret of even answering one of their questions in the first place.

Just remember in the future, when we have robot servants and hover cars, you're going to be in the same position as your parents are now; you won't be at the top of the technologically hierarchy forever. Someday, you'll be running to your kids to ask them why your laptop won't stop calling Mars, and they'll roll your eyes, just as you do now.

PHOTO BY MEGAN BUTLER

Madi Porter (12) embraces another student while handing out hugs during free hug Friday. Porter was one of the main creators of the popular movement.

LOVE *Don't Cost a Thing*

Students create free hug Friday in order to 'raise spirits' of peers

BY WILLIAM NGO
Executive Editor

"With open arms" takes on a literal meaning before sixth period each Friday afternoon. Embracing the weekend and each other, teens aspire to establish a positive environment through free hug Friday, the newest lovable event walking the halls. Stationed near door 36, the once simple, innocent joke blossomed into what is now an unexpected highlight of the week.

Earlier in the year, Madi Porter (12) was not experiencing the best day, feeling unappreciated and glum. Her friend, Anna Rhoten (12), determined to raise Porter's spirit, instinctively shouted through the halls and found students to hug Porter, conclusively proving people do care. This little act became a regular routine when Porter once counted 20 different hugs in one day.

Porter and Rhoten continue to receive excited responses from their peers, even attracting regular clients. Complete strangers have told the two they look forward to the Friday occasion every week as well.

"We didn't even expect anyone to really hug us," Rhoten said. "We thought they would just look at us weird. Who knew that strangers would want to just hug you?"

Ultimately, free hug Friday aims to make students realize there are people in their world who do care and love them. The girls have no problem taking time out of their day to better someone else's because negative thoughts can often be avoided by a mere hug, according to Rhoten.

The duo decided to focus on hugs as opposed to high fives, because high fives can often become too aggressive. The coziness of a hug cannot be compared to anything else, according to Porter.

"Hugs just make you feel warm and comfortable," Rhoten said. "Getting hugs from people just makes you feel better. It makes you feel like someone actually wants to be there for you, even if it's just a random hug from a stranger."

Because a handful of students are not able to reach door 36 within the given passing period, Porter encourages students to carry out free hug Friday in their own locations, spreading happiness schoolwide.

The hug movement does not target a certain audience; guys and girls from every grade are welcome to enjoy a quick yet impactful squeeze. Although Porter and Rhoten are seniors, they extend their arms to every student, ignoring any grade level difference. The good vibes are a calming, happy way to help finish off the day before a weekend.

"If people are having a bad day, (free hug Friday) can cheer them up to make it through the last 90 minutes of the day," Chase Carter (10) said.

Carter's daily route allows him to stop by and get a hug every week. He admits to feeling special and enlightened whenever he receives a hug on free hug Friday.

"You have to think about the love," Porter said. "Then you just hug them–not too tight, because you don't want them to die, but tight enough for you to feel a heart connection."

Unfortunately, the free hug Friday leaders will be graduating at the end of this semester, so Porter wishes for students to continue the weekly practice beyond both the next semester and for years to come. For now, the periodic hugs will continue to demonstrate the powers of connection.

"Black Eyed Peas said, 'Where's the love?'–here it is," Porter said.

Alternative drink finds friends and foes

Offering 'a taste you can't explain,' a healthy, bright drink debuts in the cafeteria

BY JESSICA TEBBEN
Life Editor

With its slim bottle and colorful wrapping, the cafeteria's latest drink option's looks may be deceiving. Wat-aah!, an acclaimed healthier version of its bottled water alternative is making waves in the lunch room and sparking controversy among students.

Available in every line in the cafeteria, Wat-aah! comes in four types: brain, bones, energy and body. Each type does what the name implies and makes the drinker smarter, stronger, more awake and healthier overall, respectively. However, many students believe the ingredients boasted on the label, such as magnesium and oxygen, really make drinkers healthier.

"I don't know if (the health benefits) are proven or not, but just (the labels) saying that makes it so people want to buy it," Trevor Lane (10) said.

While the health benefits might not work as the labels project they will, other characteristics of the bottle make it appealing to students, propelling it to ultimate lunch room popularity.

"(Wat-aah! is popular) probably just because it looks cool and it's in a cool bottle, so kids are more attracted to taking it," Jacob Fulghum (10) said.

Despite the sleek bottle and proposed health benefits, many students find the drink less than pleasing, claiming the taste ruins the joy of being offered a new option in the cafeteria. These Wat-aah! critics find the aftertaste of the drink almost metallic. Others are displeased due to the fact the more expensive alternative tastes just the same as regular bottled water.

"(Wat-aah!) really tastes no different," Sam Torres (10) said. "Plus, I think it's kind of warm."

The Wat-aah!'s bad rep, however, is met with an army of die-hard fans such as Grace Davis (10). Most of the fans have fallen head over heels for the acclaimed healthfulness of the drink, as well as the taste. Whether they don't notice the metallic aftertaste or they taste something different, their love for the water alternative is obvious.

"I like (Wat-aah!) because it has a different taste from regular water," Davis said. "It doesn't have that boring taste. It has a taste you can't explain, but it's really good."

As the split between loving and hating Wat-aah! becomes more palpable with its prolonged stay in the cafeteria, some are stuck in the middle, either enjoying certain types of the drink or feeling indifferent.

As Wat-aah! continues to make appearances in the grab-and-go lines of the cafeteria among others, there is stipulation among students about whether the drinks will last or not. The fate of the water alternative depends on student consumption, and it seems as if the fans have a lot of defending to do if they would like to continue seeing the water in the cafeteria.

"A lot of people might buy it for like a month, but then no one else will buy it anymore," Fulghum said.

According to students, Wat-aah just might currently be the most popular drink option in the cafeteria, overshadowing Gatorade and Half 'N Half Snapple alike. No matter how fleeting the appearance of the healthier water alternative may seem, one thing is for certain: students are drinking the new product up as the fresh drink is finally something new for students to marvel at.

"(Wat-aah!) is probably so popular because they never introduce anything new at school," Jillian Bilbrey (11) said.

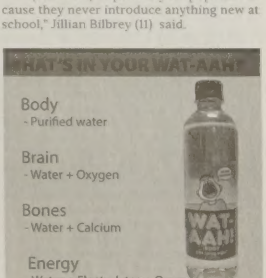


PHOTO BY REAGAN MARESCO

PHOTO BY ALLIE NELSON

Anticipated season rallies devoted fans

College basketball teams stir excitement, graduate continues his career

By Austen Cummings
Writer

College basketball fans are already raving at the thought of their idolized team returning to the court. With resilient fanatics and easy-going watchers, both students and faculty unite as the much anticipated season begins.

"Purdue is my favorite team because that is where I graduated from, but we haven't had too much to cheer about in the past few years," Amy Hamilton, school counselor, said. "When we had (Johnson) and Hummel we were ranked (at possibly) number one in the nation. That was probably five or six years ago."

A strong fascination for a team typically originates from a hometown or a family linked fan base.

"My dad's best friend is Steve Alford, who used to be the head basketball coach at New Mexico, but now is at UCLA," Nick Wright (10) said. "Right now my favorite team is UCLA, but New Mexico is a strong second,"

Aside from watching the basketball games on television at home, many fans visit the stadium to experience a live game.

"I have been to multiple games," Hamilton said. "Last year I went to one, and usually I try to go to one a season."

2014 BASKETBALL CLASS RANKINGS

1. Duke	6. Xavier
2. Kentucky	7. Kansas
3. Ohio State	8. Arizona
4. North Carolina	9. Stanford
5. Louisville	10. Maryland

SOURCE: ESPN.GO.COM

From season to season, each school has seniors graduate and freshmen arrive. These changes determine how well or poor a school will do.

"I think (Purdue) will make the tournament in March, which would be the goal," Hamilton said. "I don't think we will win Big Ten, but hopefully we are in the top half."

Despite the uncertain outlook on favorite teams, fans stay loyal and dedicated to their athletes; a mere bad play cannot sway their views in most cases.

"I think (UCLA) will be very good this year," Wright said. "They are ranked number 19 in the country and are (5-0). I think they will get a high seed come March Madness and will probably make it to the Sweet 16 or Elite 8."

With losses and new additions to school teams, new players will be crowned best player on the team.

"A.J. Hammons is (Purdue's) seven (feet tall athlete), and I think he really hasn't found his shoes yet, but once he comes into his own, he will be our standout for the season," Hamilton said.

Former local standout and class of 2013 graduate Nick Gamble has taken his basketball skills to the college level and is now playing for Davenport University in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

"I've had pretty good success," Gamble said. "I feel like Homestead did a good job of preparing me for college."

Gamble left a mark and many memories on the high school's athletic program.

he most memorable moment for the athlete and his fans was the three-point shot against Columbia City at the buzzer to win in January.

"Just being a part of the team, going to regionals and playing in front of our student section (made a lasting impact)," Gamble said.

After being a part of the high school's basketball program for four years, Gamble's graduation led him to Grand Rapids.

"It wasn't really hard to leave because I had to," Gamble said. "I'm always going miss being a part of the team and playing for the school, but my time was up and I had to move on."

Along with Gamble's fans are many more avid watchers of the college basketball season, which will continue to bring entertainment and competition to all of its viewers.

PHOTOS BY WILLIAM HOO

Weight dominates entire gameplay, wrestlers must put 'restrictions in place'

By Tessa Lutz
Social Media Manager

Wrestling yields a unique position as it is one of the only sports in which an athlete's weight is a predominant factor.

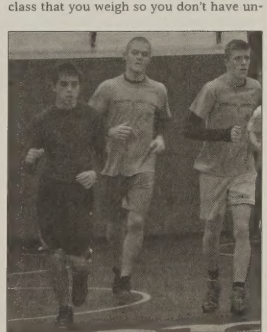
Wrestling is arguably the sport which requires the most attention to an athlete's diet, exercise and general health. The more a wrestler tries to reach his lowest possible weight, the more his health is put at risk.

In fact, the drastic methods of extreme dieting and exercise killed three college students within a month of one another, and have taken the lives of countless others.

According to the Indiana High School Athletic Association (IHSAA) Wrestling Weigh-In Regulations for 2013-14, "All wrestlers must have a minimum of six 'qualifying' weigh-ins prior to Monday, Jan. 27, 2014. This is the Monday prior to the sectional meet and the day of the seeding meetings. The six qualifying weigh-ins must occur between Nov. 18 and Jan. 27, 2014."

Weighing in a minimum of six times may seem extreme, but it is important to the safety of the participants.

"Weight classes make wrestling fair," Matt Clark (12) said. "You're wrestling the weight class that you weigh so you don't have unfair wrestling matches between a huge, big, strong heavy guy and a little guy who can barely do a push-up."



Weight classes can also determine the victor in a meet.

"It's important for the team for everyone to be in a weight class because if we don't have a person in a certain weight class, then we forfeit that weight class, giving the other team six points," Chase Woosley (12) said. "One weight class can be the difference between winning and losing a meet."

There are safer ways for wrestlers to maintain their best possible weight than extreme diet and exercise.

"Just control what you eat and make sure everything you eat is natural and organic so that you aren't putting harmful food in your body that will make you unhealthy (or) gain weight," Clark said.

With proper diet control, wrestlers are able to maintain a healthy weight, and each class has safety regulations to promote proper diet control.

"It's all about discipline," Woosley said, "There are restrictions in place for minimum body fat percentages, which helps keep kids from cutting too much weight."

The IHSAA has tightened its rules and regulations for weigh-ins and wrestling to ensure the players are able to stay safe, play fair and keep the integrity of the sport.

According to the IHSAA regulations, "For a wrestler to be eligible for the IHSAA tournament series, their coach must possess an official IHSAA Individual Wrestler Weigh-In Record sheet for each wrestler they intend to enter into the tournament series."

However, wrestling is not all about counting calories and weighing in. Both Clark and Woosley have taken life lessons from their unique wrestling experience.

"I've learned to work harder when I feel like quitting, which will help me throughout life," Clark said. "I've had nothing but fun."

Top: A wrestling member stands on top of the weight measurer. Bottom: Chase Woosley (12), Nick Van Burk (12) and Christian Hopper (12) run at the beginning of a wrestling practice.

Award-winning skier aims to appear at Olympics

After competing at three Junior Olympics, student practices and prepares for next games, future

By Sydney Isroff
Business Manager

As the majority of high school students are focused on finals and winter break, Aiden Elizondo (11) manages his academics, family life and social life around his skiing career. Thus far, the 17 year old athlete has accomplished a tremendous amount of success as a devoted competitor.

While growing up, his father took him and his siblings skiing frequently. Elizondo learned the ropes of the sport when he was three years old and has been working towards remarkable objectives ever since.

Although Elizondo's family lives in Fort Wayne, he transfers to New York for half the year to gear his focus toward practicing and competing.

"It provides new opportunities for me both in academics and in my skiing," Elizondo said.

While living in New York, Elizondo attends school to keep up with his academics.

However, the athlete is now enrolled in an online school through Ben Davis, a secondary education school in Indianapolis. This form of education provides more flexibility in his schedule and is more suitable for Elizondo's focus on skiing.

> "He always has a postive attitude about skiing. He is always looking to better himself.."
>
> **EMMETT ELIZONDO (12)**
> *Aiden Elizondo's Brother*

At such a young age, the athlete had competed at the Junior Olympics three times. The most recent competition was held in Okemo, Vt. where Elizondo placed second in Super G, a racing discipline of airline skiing; from there, he placed in the top ten in a following event.

The skier competed against hundreds of other athletes from across the East in the Junior Olympics.

As skiing is not ideally accessible in Indiana, Elizondo has managed to continue to work on his practice despite the six months he is not living in New York.

The next upcoming Junior Olympics will be held in Des Moines, Iowa where Elizondo plans to attend and return home successful once again.

Elizondo's older brother Emmett Elizondo (12) is a skier, as well. In the winter, his brother travels to New York on the weekends and teaches skiing lessons to other athletes.

"He always has a positive attitude about skiing," Emmett said. "He is always looking to better himself."

According to Emmett, Aiden's attitude towards skiing is what pushes him most each run to achieve his long lived dreams and aspirations.

Constant physical, mental and emotional practice for the skiing competitions is the key factor in equipping him for each upcoming race. Aiden plans on continuing to ski outside of high school, with hopes of keeping the sport a significant aspect of his life.

"While my goals are to race for as long as I can, we have to wait and see where skiing will take me," Aiden said.

As a long term goal, he hopes to ski on a college team, and eventually one day make it to the Olympics.

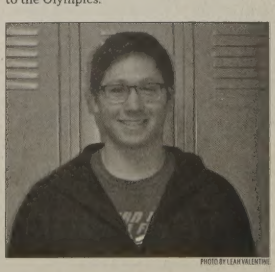


PHOTO BY LEAH VALENTINE

Recollections of team loyalty clashes future college choice

My sports fanatic father once told me, "Ohio is a sports state. Indiana is not." This trivial statement seemed simple enough when I was a kid, but now I'm not so certain. Personally, I have grown up around the Buckeyes. From the football team's national championship win 10 years ago to this season, it was ineligible to qualify.

Athletes seemed to emerge out of nowhere and the fame of their names would come and go. The talent always seemed to be a constant, though. There is obviously much more to Ohio than the fields and small towns I observed on the hour long car ride to my grandparent's house as a kid.

HAIDEN'S HAVEN

I remember seeing Hicksville, Ohio and a gas station with a large fish sign signifying we were five minutes away from our destination. Unfortunately, while I retain those small details, I can't recall one of the most monumental moments: the viewing of the 2003 Fiesta Bowl.

HAIDEN STEINGASS
Sports Editor

That year, OSU was underrated and ranked at a measly #13. Miami, on the other hand, was performing incredibly, with few hindrances along the way. As the season progressed, the Buckeyes landed themselves in the national championship. It was a quick, back and forth game before the buzzer timed out and a tie of 17 appeared on the board. Double over time settled the score with a victory from OSU.

All I can picture in my mind is my grandpa, father and brother wildly celebrating at the conclusion, a long sought victory for the team and its devoted fans.

Thankfully, I am able to remember a specific moment which occurred in OSU football history. The 2009 regular season game against USC left a devastating mark on the fans, especially my father. I remember the buildup of the first quarter to the letdown of the fourth one.

There is nothing comparable to the gut-wrenching feeling of watching your team slug off the field after an upsetting loss. To alleviate the inadequate conclusion, my dad removed his OSU jersey, walked outside and threw the jersey into our neighbor's burning fire pit. Sept. 12, 2009 will forever be known as the "First Annual Ohio State Jersey Burning" at the Steingass household.

Looking back on these memories is always light hearted because the team has come so far, yet it has managed to remain one of the most revered groups of college athletes in the league. Every year I watch my family fall more in love with the game, and cheering on the Buckeyes come football season has become a way of life for me.

Regardless of my adoration for the legendary Buckeye state, I was born and raised in the bipolar weather patterns of Indiana. Aside from the rather boring nature of the state, there is one place 179.6 miles south from here which truly redefines my opinion of Indiana in its entirety. From the white marble buildings to Memorial Stadium, Indiana University is my dream school, sports and all.

In hindsight, I question why I never had interest in applying to Ohio State University and joining my fellow fanatics in the student section. Excitingly enough, I plan to head down to Bloomington next year and evolve into a true IU Hoosier.

This transformation may be easier said than done. Any true sports fan cannot simply convert teams like you convert your favorite pair of jeans.

Your loyalty to your team is engrained in who you are, so I may have some trouble folding up my beloved OSU hoodie and swapping it out for an IU one next August. A part of me will always be loyal to the Ohio State Buckeyes, but it only seems appropriate for me to turn a corner and walk with the Indiana Hoosiers–at least for the next four years.

PHOTO BY ALLIE NELSON

Caroline Weigand (12), Rachel Farmer (12) and Reagan Cook (12) sign the National Letter of Intent, confirming their plans to continue swimming.

Athletes begin to finalize their decisions for collegiate sports

BY ADAM SWIATKOWSKI
Writer

The prospect of continuing a sport in college is a dream of many students, an idea which serves as a goal for large number of athletes finishing their careers this year.

The National Letter of Intent has been sent out to a few of Homestead athletes, and a number of them have already added their signatures.

"It has been one of my goals to (play basketball in college) since I have been in elementary and middle school," Sydney Buck (12) said. "I have always enjoyed playing basketball and going to college (on a full ride) because it is easy (for my family)."

Buck is a senior basketball player who signed for Butler University in Indianapolis recently, preparing for four years of balancing sport and academics.

"Athletically, the Butler basketball program is a good fit for me, and I like the coaching staff," Buck said. "Academics will definitely be (my priority) since I am not trying get into the WNBA after college; I need a job (in the future) and basketball will serve as more of a perk instead of a focus."

> "It has been one of my goals to (play basketball in college) since I have been in elementary and middle school."
>
> **SYDNEY BUCK (12)**
> *Butler University 2014 Undergraduate*

Reagan Cook (12) has also verbally committed to swimming in college, choosing Indiana University to continue her career as a swimmer.

"I chose IU because (the swim team) placed second at the Big 10s last year, and I wanted to be part of a competitive team," Cook said. "(I chose to swim) because I am close to Olympic Trials and it is a personal goal of mine to qualify. I also like having a sport and a team to be a part of, and I want that in college too."

The IU swim team, prominent for its successful swimming program, introduces a level of competition unfamiliar to Cook.

"It will be a lot more competitive to go to meets, and there will be more pressure to do well (as opposed to high school)," Cook said. "Also, it will be weird to swim against (teammate) Caroline Weigand for the first time since she signed to Purdue, but we will still stay friends."

Although a number of athletes have already signed, others are still determining what college they will choose based on both academic pursuits and athletic prestige.

"I am not sure where I will sign yet, but I will sign for either Illinois University or Miami of Ohio," Zach Swarts (12) says. "Coaching staff will (determine where I go), and both schools have good programs. I want to be a business major, and both Miami and Illinois have good business schools."

Most athletes also incorporate college life into their consideration of a school. Athletics aside, living close to home and having a nice campus are important to consider when choosing a school for the next four years.

"I like the Butler campus and the downtown area of Indy," Buck said. "My friends and family will be able to drive down and watch me play."

With college signings completed, students' senior year will serve as preparation for four more years of continuing their sport.

TOTAL PACKAGE

The National Letter of Intent offers benefits for prospective student athletes including the following:

1. After signing, the student no longer receives recruitment contacts.

2. A student receives an athletic scholarship for one academic school year.

SOURCE: WWW.NCAA.ORG

Team's expectations challenge teens

Six practices per week force swimmers to balance personal life, sports and school

BY ETHAN YDE
Writer

The swim team is notorious for its rigorous practices, as well as the time commitment an athlete must make in order to be on the team.

Because swimming takes so much dedication and devotion, it also puts a great deal of pressure on the team members.

"(Swimming) wears down on your physical and mental stability little by little, until you can hardly take it anymore," Hallie Nowak (11) said. "I swam for eight years, and it was too much weight to bear for the remainder of high school. Being a part of something so strenuous added to the already present pressures of school, friends, family and thinking of my future."

While many swimmers enjoy their sport, they can all agree it is an enduring one. The school swim team swims six days a week, and half of those days include three separate practices per day. An average of twenty hours is spent a week in practice.

Practices consume any free time previously established, and the athletes are not allowed to be involved in any other extracurricular offered by the school.

"Even though I really enjoy being a part of the swim team, it makes it really hard to complete all of my homework, and I am really tired during school," Cameron Nealley (10) said. "It's worth it to be a part of the team, but it is a big commitment."

The stress of high school level swimming is unbearable for many, and it is a time when many athletes reconsider the sport once they spent endless hours practicing.

Sometimes, with school expectations set high, it is difficult for the swimmers to be putting their full effort into practice, but they find a way to work through it. After all, they do have to swim for up to eight miles in a single day.

"The swim team is enjoyable but a tough commitment since its practices require a decent amount of time, and it can be difficult to manage," Sam Dynako (10) said. "However, I have found that if I manage my time wisely during school and after practice, I can finish all of my homework and still have time to do other things."

Although many swimmers have become accustomed to the hectic lifestyle of an athlete, if the sport is infringing on school grades, free time and the ability to participate in other extracurricular activities, leaving the team or dedicating themselves to it becomes an important decision to make for the high school level swimmers.

"I still maintain that quitting the swim team was the best possible option for me," Nowak said. "I now have time to go to school clubs and have sleepovers, and being on a team that required so much dedication disallowed these activities. It was a hard decision to quit something that consumed a large portion of my life, but it is time to move on to bigger and better things."

PHOTO BY MEGAN BUTLER

Assistant coach Jon, former swim team member, offers advice and critique to a student during swim practice.

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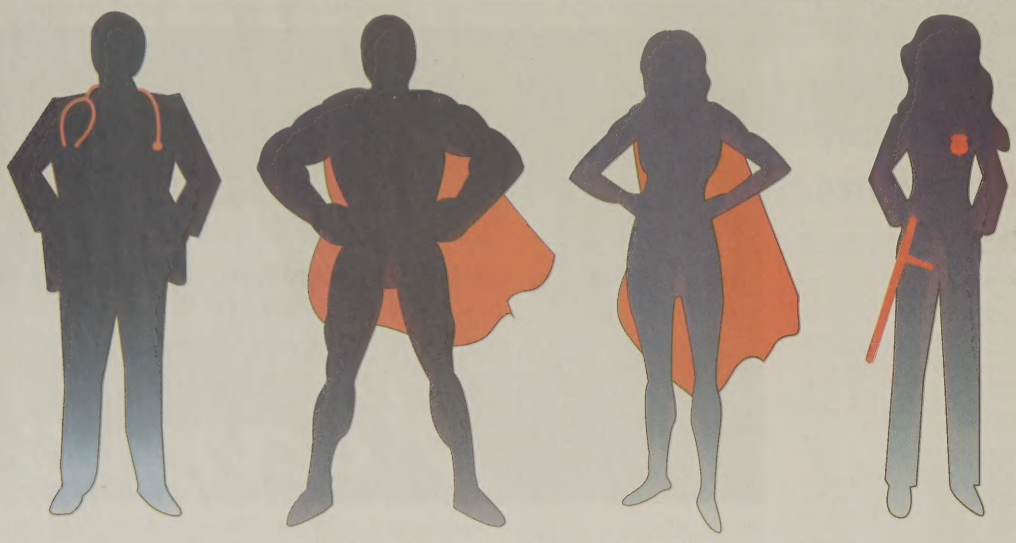

"A REAL HERO SHOULD BE AN ALL-ROUND ROLE MODEL RATHER THAN SOMEONE WITH JUST BRUTE STRENGTH."

-EESHA BEMRA (11)

Student definition of a hero demonstrates imagination and reality

By Allie Nelson
Executive Editor

From young ages, students have phased through different idols; Marvel superheroes, professional athletes, actors and performers were the norm for the elevated title. The unrealistic motives and paths to goodness these people share trigger their distinction from the true hero.

An extravagant cape, an eye mask and a specialized power: a superhero. Whether or not the community do-gooders are true heroes is uncertain; however, the symbols of strength and humanitarian behavior dominate film and literary culture.

Despite their good intentions and perfect exterior, superheroes may lack the depth necessary for their name to be shortened to the general "hero." Unable to connect with people on a personal level, a barrier between superheroes and plain heroes exists.

The true hero is a real person, persevering though common problems, not necessarily relying on fame or material possessions to better themselves.

Real heroes are relatable. They are a hope for the future, an example of the effects of good decisions and the repercussions of the bad ones. They offer strength through rougher times, their perseverance motivating their followers. Superheroes are the symbol for real heroes, who lead by strength from within.

"I think as kids we are so imaginative and we love these fantastical creations that directors come up with in a studio," Eesha Bemra (11) said. "They don't really know to look further at human characteristics so they look at superhuman stuff. (They) start to realize personality is so much of a bigger deal. A real hero should be an all-around role model rather than someone with just brute strength."

Specifically, students often shape their lives by modeling them after family members. Idolizing a parent may sound cliché, but even they are heroes for unique reasons, whether they are detached idols or inspiring teachers.

"(A hero is) someone you can look up to or someone you can learn from, someone you know you really respect," Jacob Zelt (10) said. "My brother Nash is my hero. He's taught me a lot about life. He has autism so it's made me a better person and it's made me understand that I'm very fortunate."

Although the definition varies, the status is similarly given to those who inspire others to act more like they do. A hero is a person someone simply wants to be. Despite their separate methods of inspiring, heroes must possess certain characteristics which allow them to be admired.

"(Heroes) should be trustworthy and kind," Brady Sheehan (10) said. "A hero is someone you want to be able to talk to."

Common heroes are not famous. They are not well-known or widely respected. They may work on a larger scale but more discretely. Their impact is not obvious but it may travel. Not only do heroes benefit those they directly influence, but these role models' effects branch out to people among those they lead.

"When my friends come to me with problems, I try to do what my mom does and relate some kind of problem I had and tell them what I did and see if they liked the result that came out of it," Ashley Mueller (10). "They can make their own decisions from there."

In order for the benefits of students' heroes to continue, they must maintain the understanding to search for people they sincerely appreciate as influences. Rather than being swayed by the media or by surrounding situations without a goal, students must make decisions according to their own principles.

"I guess its like being unique in who you idolize rather than idolizing the E! network," Bemra said. "We should idolize people who actually do good for society. You should idolize someone who you would actually want to be."

No matter who the hero is, a hero is specific to each individual, representing not only their values but also his future path. The figure offers hope and guidance in times of uncertainty and concretely remind students of where they want to be.

"Sometimes we reflect on our own insecurities so we look to those heroes to represent what we lack," Bemra said. "Having a hero is looking for what to strive for in a positive light."

"My hero is Florence Welch. Her music sparks infinite imagination and inspiration, and I love it."
-Hannah Anelle (12)

""My favorite hero is probably Batman, because I watched all the old cartoons when I was little, and I've liked it ever since."
Matt Weiberdt (9)

"My hero is my dad, because he has been through so much. He is a good role model who I admire so much."
Sai Sureshkumar (11)

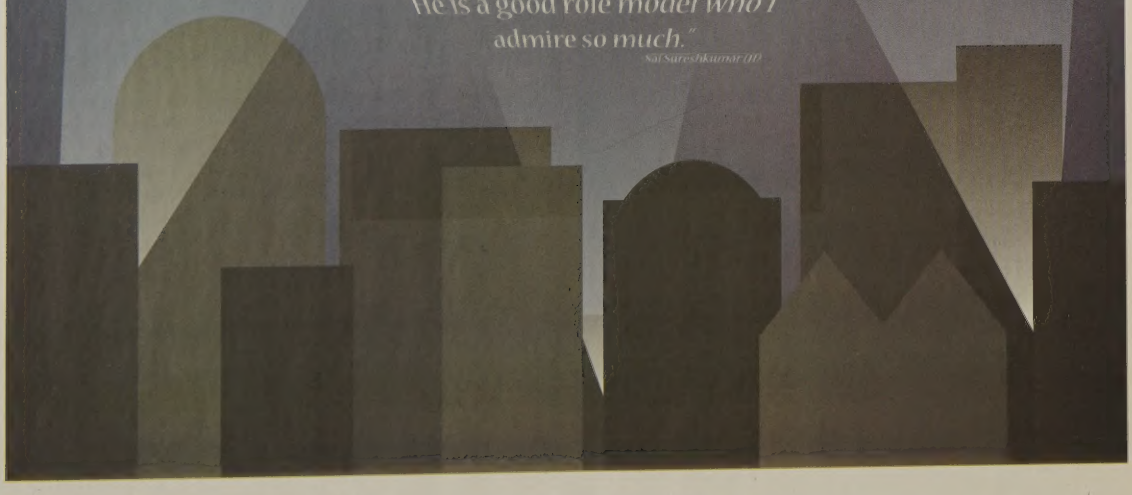

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PHOTO BY MEGAN MIKESELL

A student practices her penmanship as she writes sentences in cursive rather than print.

Cursive to stay in curriculum

Indiana moves to keep debated cursive educational requirement

BY IAN MCKENZIE
Copy Editor

As technology becomes increasingly implanted in the educational process, teaching cursive handwriting has become a debatable component of the educational curriculum. The state of Indiana recently revealed its respect for the skill when it moved to keep the cursive requirement, along with six other states: California, Idaho, Kansas, Massachusetts, North Carolina and Utah.

"I know in the elementary schools they still focus heavily on penmanship and cursive writing," Olivia Miller, English teacher, said. "I just have to question it, especially as we move towards STEM (science, technology and math curricula). I would much rather my son's time be focused on math and science rather than if he can make a correct 'v' (in cursive)."

Its detractors view it as antiquated and pointless proportional to the growth of technology; on the flip side, its proponents believe it is linked to motor function and hand-eye coordination development, not to mention that it is a key component of the country's cultural identity.

Within the confines of the school, students reflect those same divergent opinions regarding the practice; Logan Reed (10) is pro-cursive and Shelby Berthold (9) is

▶ SEE 'CURSIVE,' PAGE 2

Students wrap up annual game

BY APARNA CHINTAPALLI
Writer

Preparing students to develop positive money habits and financial skills for the future, the Stock Market Game has an integral role in teaching students about economic growth and sustainment.

As a part of the curriculum for students taking economics, the Stock Market Game has served the purpose of introducing investment options, initiative, communication and, overall, a wide range of skills to participants.

The Stock Market Game is a simulation program that replicates the live U.S. stock market, enabling students to practice handling stocks without the real financial risk. Each respective class was split into numerous groups containing three to four people. At the beginning of the game, each group received 100,000 dollars; and if needed, additional funds could be borrowed depending on the amount of equity in the account. Within the game, students are open to buy in stocks, mutual funds, and various types of bonds offered.

Although there is a wide range of purchasing options, there are many restrictions placed. There is a limit to five dollars per share, 100 shares per stock and investments limited to 13% of its buying power in individual companies or in hard dollars, cannot exceed 26,000.

With an array of decisions to make, students are held responsible for applying sensible economic skills, and essentially, working towards financial success.

"Through this game, I have gained

▶ SEE 'STOCK MARKET,' PAGE 2

PHOTOS BY MEGAN BUTLER

Ben Lemke (12) reads to an elementary student while volunteering at Whispering Meadows Elementary School with other members of the varsity and JV football.

Football players read to elementary students, volunteer weekly

BY KATIE DUNLAP
News Editor

Football players began visiting Whispering Meadows Elementary School every Friday after school as part of the Homestead Heroes program, in which they read to or listen to a student from Kindergarten to fifth grade read.

"We were able to coordinate some interested players to commit to showing up every Friday to interact with students the classroom teachers felt would benefit from a special bond with a football player," Krista Berning, Whispering Meadows literary specialist, said. "The reasons really vary from student to student, but it all is in hopes of helping the boys commit to being a reader for life."

The football team connected with the elementary school after Connie Christophersen, district language arts coordinator, met with the principal and literary specialist of Whispering Meadows and learned that male influences would benefit the younger students.

"As language arts coordinator for the district, I visit elementary and middle schools and my goal is to assist in any way I can in the arena of language arts," Christophersen said. "I visited the principal and literary specialist of Whispering Meadows (...) and asked what I could do to help (them), and (the principal) asked if I could somehow get some volunteers from the high school, young men, to come and spend time

▶ SEE 'HOMESTEAD HEROES,' PAGE 2

BETWEEN THE LINES

25	8	200
minutes spent reading per week	volunteer visits already made this year	minutes spent with young readers so far

BRIEFS

DRIVERS ED
The book portion of drivers ed classes are being held this winter. The class runs from Jan. 27 to March 3 with classes meeting several times per week. Each class meets from 6-8, and the cost is $125. Students who desire to take the book part must be 15 by Jan. 27 in order to be eligible to sign up. Registration is to take place at 6:30 on the morning of Jan. 16 in the community room. The driving portion of the class will be available in the summer. Contact student services for any additional information.

PARENT NIGHT
Parents of students of the entering freshman class of 2018 are invited for a school visit at 6:30 on Jan. 15 in the freshman academy. This parent night will provide parents with information regarding the ninth grade academy, ninth grade scheduling, advanced placement and dual-credit courses and co-curricular and extracurricular activities available.

COVENTRY AUTO WASH
Due to the unexpected closing of Coventry Auto Wash, car was cards previously purchased from athletic fundraisers are no longer valid. Those who have purchased car wash cards from athletes may bring the card to the Athletic Office in order to trade them in for two car washes from Mike's Car Wash.

Early graduates to finish classes

Students graduate in order to get an 'early start' on their future endeavors

BY HAMNA QURESHI
Writer

Every year, approximately 25 students graduate early and leave high school up to two semesters earlier than the rest of their class. Some students choose to graduate after their junior year, but others wait until after the first semester of their senior year.

Carly Hamilton (12) is planning on graduating one semester early so that she can use her spring semester to start classes at Indiana-Purdue Fort Wayne (IPFW).

"I decided to graduate early because I had most of my credits done and thought it would give me a jumpstart on taking college classes at IPFW in the spring," Hamilton said. "I'm looking forward to having more time to work and taking classes that will go towards my degree."

▶ SEE 'EARLY GRADS,' PAGE 2

PHOTO BY MEGAN BUTLER

7th semester graduates walk out of door four on the out of school. For these students, the end of finals on Dec. 20 signifies the end of their high school careers. Graduating early can provide some with numerous benefits, including getting a head start on the plans already decided for the future.

Finals week again ends on half day

Changes in state legislation make it possible to conclude week with partial day

BY MEGAN CATER
Copy Editor

Students received a half day on Dec. 20, allowing them to leave school after they completed the two finals scheduled for the last day of finals. Due to current state legislation regarding half days, in the past Southwest Allen County Schools were not able to allow students to leave after completing their finals during the last week of the semester.

However, this year, due to certain legal reasons, students were able to leave after their fourth and seventh period finals on Friday.

"Our school and our superintendent were in contact with the Department of Education about a recent change in law and we came to the conclusion, based on legal conversations, that we would be able to have a half day," Park Ginder, principal, said.

Half days were generally reserved for parent-teacher conferences and finals weeks.

"Somewhere between five and eight years ago, it was determined (at the state level) that we couldn't do half days anymore for professional development," Ginder said.

Following the legislation

▶ SEE 'HALF DAY,' PAGE 2

> By having half days, we can make it as productive as possible for everyone involved.
>
> **PARK GINDER**
> *Principal*

▶STOCK MARKET CONTINUED FROM 1

better analytical and prediction skills in regards to economics," Rutva Shah (12) said. "Also, I feel like the game is very real and applicable to investing, so the insight I've gained can help me later in life."

The Stock Market Game is more than an individual classroom-based project, it is a nationally ranked competition. Currently there are 105 groups competing in Indiana, and nationally there are 1056 groups in the game. Each group is ranked in the state and national levels based on its performance.

"Each group researches companies that have a potential to perform well in the future but currently are undervalued," Harish Bingi (11) said. "Identifying these companies takes time and careful research and the Stock Market Game has helped us to understand how the actual U.S. stock market functions by giving us hands-on experience with trading stocks. It has provided a great opportunity for us to put into practice the concepts and principles that we have learned in our economics class."

Arranged by the Securities Industry and Financial Markets Association (SIFMA) Foundation, the Stock Market Game allows not only teachers to implement this program into their studies, but individual students and adults have the ability to participate as well. Teachers throughout the nation have observed a positive influence of the SIFMA Foundation's Stock Market Game on their students, including better attendance and increased engagement in class. These anecdotes were confirmed when the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA) funded a study of the Stock Market Game program by American Institutes for Research (AIR). At the conclusion of their year-long study, the AIR confirmed quantitatively what teachers have mentioned: the Stock Market Game engages students and improves academic performance, financial knowledge and saving and investing habits.

"My students enjoy playing the Stock Market Game," Jeff Livensparger, economics teacher, said. "They frequently ask for more time to research stocks and many get competitive with regard to the value of their portfolio investments.

▶1056

groups competing nationally in the Stock Market Game.

Overall, they gain an arrangement of skills including financial planning, collaboration, technology, a general understanding of the stock market, application of investment strategies, meeting time lines, portfolio production and more."

Because the Stock Market Game is a simulation, it has its limitations on providing students with the real experience of handling stocks.

"The skills and general understanding of the game are applicable to handling stocks in real life, but the game strategy is not," Livensparger said. "The game lasts for a little more than three months, and students are trying to make a lot of money in a very short period of time. This would not be a good strategy to pursue in real life. Learning about how to research stocks, discover market trends and evaluate investment connections are the greatest strengths of this game."

HOMESTEAD DEBUNKED

Myth: Laura Laudeman (12) is suing the school board for not allowing her to switch out of her AP Calculus class.

Status: False - Although Laudeman was upset about the situation, she does not intend on suing the district.

Though Laudeman is not suing the school district, the misconception came because a lawyer was present during mediations over the issue as the family of Laudeman felt as though their concerns were not being taken into account by the administration. When a lawyer was brought into the situation, the assumption was the family had the intention of suing the school. The main reason Laudeman was not able to drop out of AP Calculus was because she already has a study hall, and no lower course is offered in place of AP Calculus.

Her suggestion to avoid being in this situation would be for all students to ensure that, if the student is in an AP class, there is a lower level class offered in case they realize they are unable to remain in the course.

"If an AP class is offered, students absolutely must have the option to level down should it turn out that a student took on too much," Laudeman said. "There needs to be either a regular section of calculus to level down to, or students should be allowed to level down to discrete math."

Laudeman chose to leave the class not because the course was too difficult, but because her course load and extracurriculars were overwhelming and AP Calculus was not suitable for her.

"It just didn't fit into my future; my other courses align with my liberal arts curriculum much more closely," Laudeman said.

Concern also fell upon the fact that if one student was able to leave the class, others might follow and desire to do the same.

Resolving the matter took nearly nine weeks. The request was made a few weeks into the semester but was unable to be carried out at the time. Unable to enter a math class halfway through the semester, Laudeman was forced to have a second study hall.

"I do condone taking care of yourself and only taking what you can manage," Laudeman said. "You cannot spread yourself too thin."

--Tessa Lutz

▶HOMESTEAD HEROS CONTINUED FROM 1

reading with (the elementary students)."

Christophersen immediately focused on the football team, due to their large numbers and because the students needed more male influences for a variety of reasons.

"We do not have many male teachers in our building, and some students do not see their fathers as often as they would like due to being from a split family or jobs that require traveling," Berning said.

The players do not only read to the students, but they also develop impactful relationships with them.

The primary goal of the program is to expose elementary students to reading.

"The football players were encouraged to have discussions with the students about reading, school, their interests, football, what they like to read and even what is hard for them," Berning said. "Basically we were wanting the boys to make a friendship with the elementary student and demonstrate being a role model of a good student, athlete and citizen."

A specific focus on reading starts the elementary school students on a positive path they can continue throughout their academic career.

"What we are looking for is helping our students commit to reading 20 minutes a day," Berning said. "Research has proven that 20 minutes a day beyond reading in the classroom catapults students into much better readers and greater success in learning. Learning success often leads to life success, and that is what we are all about in Southwest Allen."

The interaction with elementary students is important to the players involved.

"I like getting to be with the kids," Erik Elston (11) said. "Every time you walk through the door, they're always smiling and ready to read. I enjoy helping out other kids and families."

Berning hopes the players are learning from their experiences with the students and teaching them important lessons they can apply to other areas of the their lives as well.

"We hope the Homestead students learn the joy of volunteering and reap rewards of creating a friendship with a person much younger than themselves. (...) One other benefit from the program is the Homestead students are learning what the word commitment means," Berning said. "It is demanding in that the players are required to show up every Friday. The players also know how disappointed the elementary students become when their football player does not make it."

The program is expanding, as six girls from the soccer team have started reading to individual girls on Mondays and Tuesdays. As the opportunities continue to increase, Berning encourages others that are interested to get involved.

"If there are more Homestead students wishing to participate in the program, we would love to include them in the Homestead Hero bunch," Berning said. " It does not have to be a football player or a soccer player (...) but reliable students willing to commit to weekly reading sessions with a friendly, fun loving elementary student."

The football players have had a large impact on the students, as they are role models who show them how fun, important and rewarding reading and academics can be.

"Students are feeling like they are worth someone's time and love. The children are learning reading is a vehicle for conversation and bonding," Berning said. "It also helps the elementary students see that big, tough, strong football players read. They are very cool people and they are not too cool to open a book and read."

▶CURSIVE CONTINUED FROM 1

anti-cursive.

"It brings a connection to the past," Reed said. "Functionally, it's not important, but historically, it is."

Berthold echoes critics of continuing to teach the skill, believing that technology is going to potentially box out any need for cursive at all.

"Pretty soon, school is pretty much going to lose paper and go all digital, so why would kids learn cursive when they are just going to be typing?" Berthold said.

Many take this more grounded stance on handwriting in general, looking past the strict rules of cursive handwriting and viewing legibility as the most important part of the communication process.

"Most kids do a modified cursive print anyways," Miller said. "I think penmanship is probably an area we should focus on more. (Meaning) the legibility of the words, not necessarily if it's correct cursive handwriting."

> "Functionally, (cursive) is not important, but historically it is."
>
> **LOGAN REED (10)**
> *Student*

Today more than ever, handwriting is being marginalized and as a result has eroded into something only really useful for quick note-taking rather than any form of communication between people.

"It's calling the kettle black because I do not have great penmanship, but I don't know that (the cause is) necessarily technology as much as it is the busy schedules we have, and that people are always rushed," Miller said.

In the modern classroom, the majority of student work is done through a word processor, an advancement that undeniably mitigates the importance of the practice, but Reed observes there are still formats in which legible handwriting is important.

"As of right now, standardized tests still make you hand write many things for timed essays," Reed said. "I also feel like once you get good at cursive it becomes a lot more quick and fluent to use (in those settings)."

Above all else, flexibility is key when dealing with student handwriting.

"I let kids write however they need to write," Miller said. "Especially since we are 1-to-1, I see the future of cursive writing, or even penmanship, being less of an issue."

Pros, cons and practicalities aside, Miller believes handwriting tendencies, along with the ugly print-and-cursive amalgams that come with it, are valuable indicators of a person's personality.

"Good or bad, pretty penmanship or not, handwriting pretty much becomes a signature of who you are," Miller said.

▶HALF DAY CONTINUED FROM 1

deciding there were no more half days, students were required to be in school for 180 full days.

Subsequently, during finals weeks, after the first final was finished on the last day of finals, students would go to one class and remain in that class for a few hours as a "study period." Lunch was eaten during this period. After the "study period," students went to their last period for their last final.

However, some classes turn in projects as their final. For these classes, they had another hour and a half of waiting for the school day to end.

"We've had full days the last few years and had to fill that time during finals in ways that may not have been productive," Ginder said. "By having half days, we can make it as productive as possible for everyone involved."

The extended "study period" for one final was tedious for teachers and students alike.

"I think it provides both teachers and students a lot less stress," Stephanie Wiley, teacher, said. "As a teacher, it's hard to plan for periods that have already had their finals. I think it also provides students the opportunity to come in and get done what they need to do and then leave; I think it gives them more of a freedom that is closer to the college experience."

Whether or not the half day is a permanent change is yet to be determined. However, students went into this finals week with the thought in the back of their minds that once the pencils were down and the Scantrons were turned in, they would be able to go home and enjoy holiday break.

"I really like the half day because then we don't have to waste a period going to lunch when we don't need to," Amani Martin (12) said. "It's sad that half days finally came my senior year, but I'm glad we got to at least take advantage of the new half days (for our last year)."

▶EARLY GRADS CONTINUED FROM 1

Madison York (11) is also planning to graduate after her first semester of senior year.

"The benefits of graduating earlier are you get out of (high school) faster," York said. "You get a quicker start on moving on and getting on with your life."

Graduating early also gives York the opportunity to receive a scholarship for finishing high school in seven semesters.

"I have a certain amount of time for a scholarship that I have, and as long as I go to school right away I get a certain amount of money every month," York said.

Along with scholarships and early starts on college classes, graduating early also gives students the opportunity to enter the workforce faster, according to Brian Dobias, counselor.

"A student can reduce the number of years they will be in school, allowing them to enter the workforce early," Dobias said.

While there are certainly advantages to graduating early, this course of action is not suitable for most students.

Hamilton notes that getting all the required credits done on time was challenging.

"I had difficulties getting all of my credits needed for my academic honors diploma," Hamilton said. "I had to take an online class which I found especially challenging."

Hamilton says she will miss certain aspects of high school.

"I will miss seeing some of my friends every day, as well as some of the sports events," Hamilton said.

Dobias recommends caution when thinking about graduating early. He says not all colleges approve of taking a semester off at the end of high school.

"Many colleges and university admissions offices evaluate students by the amount of academic preparation they will receive before they arrive on campus," Dobias said.

Graduating early can be a difficult, life-altering decision and is not recommended for all students.

"I would only recommend graduating early to a student who has a very specific plan on how they would use the semester or year they gain by graduating early. That may be finding employment, entering the military or attending college," Dobias said. "My personal opinion is that overall, the disadvantages (of graduating early) outweigh the advantages, especially for a college-bound student."

Students who ultimately decide to graduate early should do so in the beginning of their high school career.

"Planning to graduate in six or seven semesters should be done early in a high school career," Dobias said. "Students work with their counselor to ensure that they have met all the necessary graduation requirements to satisfy a Core 40 or Academic Honors Diploma."

While graduating early does not work for all high school students, Hamilton and York are confident with their decisions and with their future plans.

Graduating students begin packing their things as they prepare for their various future plans.

"I feel very prepared for the real world, especially considering that I've been exposed to the college atmosphere already by doing the higher-ed program," Hamilton said.

York advises students to do what they feel most comfortable with in terms of graduation.

"Some people say they miss (high school) afterwards, but I'm pretty sure I won't," York said. "Do what you want to do. Do what you think is going to get you further in life and make you happier."

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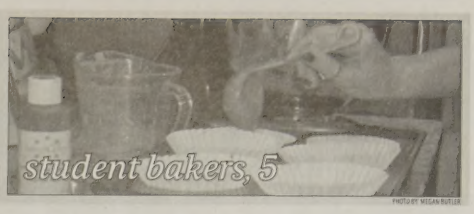


PHOTO BY MEGAN BUTLER

'Selfie' accurately proclaimed to be word of the year by Oxford Dictionary

BY KYLIE POLING
Opinion Editor

This year has seen a number of new words become part of our everyday vernacular. There are many brand new words that we have seen arise, like twerk and ratchet, but there are also some that have taken on new connotations, such as basic. None of these words, though, are more prolific than the word Oxford Dictionaries chose as its Word of the Year: selfie.

Even though the word is somewhat annoying, its prevalence is undeniable. The saturation of the Internet with selfies demonstrates our culture's self-obsession, but despite its egotist tendencies, selfies have become a prominent aspect of our daily lives.

The word first appeared in an Australian chat room in 2002, where the context of the word is unknown. Despite its inception from over a decade ago, 'selfie' did not appear regularly until late last year. Since its revival, use of the word has increased 17,000% in 2013, according to Oxford Dictionaries.

This dramatic increase in use prompted Oxford to add it to its official online database this past August, thus making selfie an accredited word of the English language, but not included in its printed Oxford English Dictionary. The company defined selfie as "a photograph that one has taken of oneself, typically one taken with a smartphone and uploaded to a social media website."

To visualize the phenomena of the word and the uproar it has created, just log in to Instagram. There you will find over 47 million--and counting--pictures that are hashtagged "selfie." There is literally an entire day on Instagram that is dedicated to the selfie, which you can experience every Sunday through the #selfiesunday hashtag. And that's just one social medium. Millions of other selfies exist on almost every virtual plane in existence.

> "The saturation of the Internet with selfies demonstrates our culture's self-obsession, but despite its egotist tendencies, selfies have become a promient aspect of our daily lives."
>
> **KYLIE POLING**

Sometimes, posting a selfie to social media can merely be a ploy seeking flattery. "Hair looks bad today, but whatever," a girl might say after spending two hours in front of a mirror with a flat iron, just to have people comment, "No, girl! Your hair is beautiful!" When posted in this manner, selfies can be regarded as one fishing for compliments Situations such as these make seeing selfies annoying, and subsequently cause a negative connotation to be associated with the word itself.

Nearly everyone has taken a selfie nowadays. Students, siblings, parents, teachers, administrators--even grandparents--are all guilty of this digital trend. In fact, President Obama recently took a selfie with Helle Thorning-Schmidt and David Cameron, prime ministers of Denmark and Britain respectively, at the memorial service held for Nelson Mandela. I am curious to know why selfies were being taken at the service of such a dignified man, but that's beside the point.

The popularity of the selfie also brings some negative effects. We all know one person who posts a selfie every single day, always from the same angle with the exact same facial expression and looking the exact same as he or she did in the previous ten selfies.

Despite this annoyance, however, the resilience of the word seems to be upheld by its beloved users. For the time being, 'selfie' will still be heard, as well as seen, daily. It will be remembered for all of time as the 2013 Word of the Year, and as for me, I'm just glad Oxford overlooked the most awful word of the year: 'twerk.'

twitter take

The Spartana attempts to capture the most impulsive responses on Twitter.

with @theSpartana

Question: "What's a New Year's Resolution you wish you could keep?"

@BabyBerghoff - Sarah Berghoff (12) ▶ "Not to babysit every weekend. Trust me, it is a lot harder than it sounds."

@gxlly - Gillian Martin (10) ▶ "Harry Styles."

@KelseyHerber - Kelsey Herber (9) ▶ "To stop loving food. But we all know that's never going to happen."

@gibson_rush- Colin Gibson (11) ▶ "Remembering to moisturize my legs before school each day."

@HeavenstoBetsy - Betsy Badders (12) ▶ "To spend less money on chicken bowls."

Holiday spending unnecessary

Parents approach Christmas shopping with unrealistic shopping budget

BY KATIE MAHER
Writer

Parents typically spend around $150-200 for younger children and around $300-600 per older child every Christmas, according to Circleofmoms.com. Of course, parents want to do their best to fulfill every wish on their child's Christmas list, but does the excessive amount of cash and effort put into finding every single gift and more take away from what Christmas really should be about? Christmas should not only be about spoiling kids, but rather about giving back, as well.

Before parents are handed an essentially 10-page Christmas shopping list, they should first talk to their children to find around three or four "bigger" gifts that they would like. Limiting the number of larger gifts will not only save money in the bank, but will certainly make the child think about what they truly want, and appreciate the gift even more instead of just having a "get whatever I want" outlook on Christmas. Parents will tend to worry about taking away the surprise by asking, but asking is the most efficient way to ensure that kids will still have a great Christmas, and takes away the stress of not knowing what to get them.

Another way to try to cut the Christmas expenses is to set a shopping budget. This varies depending on the number of children and ages, for older kids tend to want more expensive items. The budget will need to be adjusted depending on the number of kids and age factors, but just having a price range in mind can greatly reduce the panic of the bill.

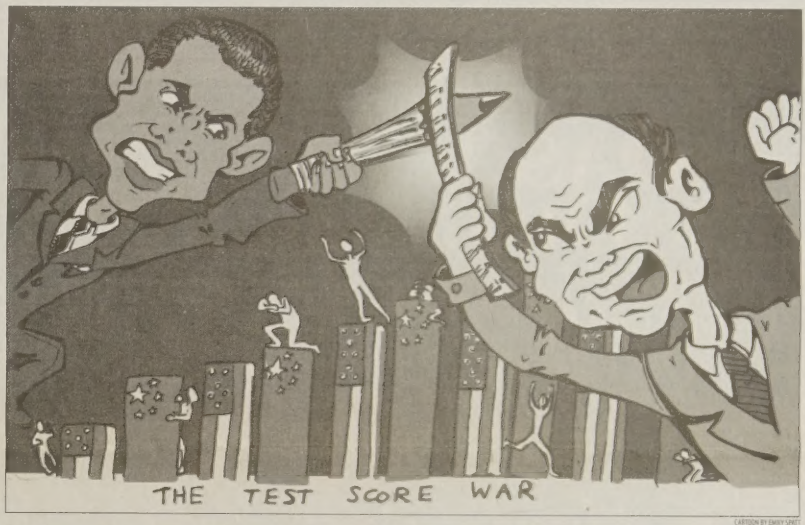
Parents should try to stay around the appointed price range, and avoid purchasing unnecessary items that will break easily, or never be taken out of the box. Spending too much on kids for Christmas is ridiculous, because it is not about just getting everything they want. Christmas is a great time to give back to those less fortunate in the community, and that view is often ignored by kids. It may be cliché, but Christmas should be more about giving--not receiving.

▶738
dollars expected to be spent by each holiday shopper in 2013.

SOURCE: GOBANKINGRATES.COM

There are kids all across America who will not have anything under the tree on Christmas day, and volunteering or donating to organizations like Toys for Tots or The Salvation Army will give less-fortunate children the chance to have a Christmas. Parents can take their family to the store to shop for a less-fortunate child, and tell their children how happy this child is going to be after finding unexpected gifts that he or she would not have received without their help.

So try to limit the Christmas bill and the greedy holiday ideal, and use the season to make memories and do good deeds. But most off all, remember that Christmas is more about spending time with loved ones, and not just spending money on gifts.



CARTOON BY EMILY SINET

National academics fall behind

Country's low ranking in PISA test discredits educational standards

The release of the 2012 Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) test results have been the cause of panic for national educational advisers. The PISA test, a test coordinated by Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), is administered to students aged 15 throughout the world. According to The National Center for Educational Statistics, as in previous years, The United States has been placed at ranks in the double digits, proving that at least some education reform is necessary if the United States' status of a global super power is to remain intact.

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The majority of attention from this test is brought to Asian countries, specifically China, who's students are scoring exceptionally. They are scoring well enough that, according to PISA, they are considered the most highly skilled academically in the world. While the abilities of the Chinese are continuing to intimidate its competitive nations, China is not necessarily the model of pure success. According to Arne Duncan, U.S. Department of Education Secretary, students in China are going to school 25 to 30 percent longer than students in the United States. The life of the average Chinese student is built around school, whereas the United States is working on developing a more well-rounded individual.

An educational system more worth modeling is that of Finland. Finland's education is centered around individualized attention and highly educated teachers. "Nearly 30 percent of Finland's children receive some kind of special help during their first nine years of school" according to The Smithsonian Magazine.

Furthermore, the teachers are selected from the top 10 percent of the nation's graduates and are required to receive a master's degree in education. Finland's schools are small, small enough for students to receive personalized attention. In the 2012 PISA test, Finland ranked 11th in math, 5th in science and 6th in reading as opposed to the United States which ranked 36th, 28th and 24th respectively.

Although an educational system more like that of Finland would be ideal, there would have to be some changes made to the American culture. As of now, it would be difficult to convince the top 10 percent of the nation's graduates to pursue teaching; most top students continue on to obtain professional degrees to practice business, law or medicine. This lack of desire to pursue a path in education is the result of a cultural stigma. Teachers do not receive the glory or the salary that those in higher professions do. A rise in pay would mean a large education reform that could increase government spending, increase taxes or turn education largely over to the private sector. However, a redistribution of funds is a small price to pay for the global upper hand on education.

Had the PISA test rankings come back with United States at least in the top 20, then the concern for the future of the United States would not be so valid. With rankings so low and global tensions so high, the United States must improve educationally to reassume its position as an economically and militaristically competitive nation.

{The Bottom Line} *PISA test signals a need for educational improvement in the country in order to maintain a powerful worldly influence.*

Christmas' true meaning distorted

Commercialism of season, importance of Santa secularize religious holiday

BY COLBY SHOUP
Writer

There's no doubt that the Santa Claus icon has had a huge effect on popular culture, not just in America, but all over the world. There's even an entire town named after the character, Santa Claus, Ind. Every year millions of kids sit on the laps of department store Santas, and millions of towns like Fort Wayne dedicate flamboyant displays solely to Saint Nick. This excessive celebration of a single make-believe character raises the question; has Santa Claus taken the 'Christ' out of Christmas?

In reality, this is really not the terrible crime that fundamental Christians would have you believe. It's perfectly fine to secularize Christmas, as the prominence of Santa Claus slowly seems to be doing, because when Christmas first started it was mainly made up of secular customs anyway. The holiday was an attempt by the Christian church to try to eclipse the popularity of Saturnalia, a holiday created by ancient Greeks and Romans to celebrate the shortest day of the year.

When Christmas was created, it absorbed traditions of Saturnalia, such as decorating a tree and putting presents under it. Now, besides nativity scenes, the occasional Christmas pageant and the tradition some families have of going to church every Christmas Eve, very little traditions associated with the seminal holiday have to do with Jesus' birth. The majority of these traditions come from the now-extinct Roman holiday.

> "Now, (...) very little traditions associated with the seminal holiday have to do with Jesus' birth."
>
> **COLBY SHOUP**

It's extremely hypocritical of fundamentalist Christians to complain about Christmas being secularized, when the majority of traditions were stolen from an originally secular holiday. If they want to focus more on the birth of Jesus, then they should move the celebration to a different day, preferably in August, when he was actually born, and turn Christmas back into Saturnalia, a completely secular holiday that was once celebrated by just about everyone.

To solve this seasonal conflict, the world should agree to celebrate Jesus' birthday on the day it belongs, thus allowing the Santa Claus myth and the winter solstice to be enjoyed by everyone as they were intended to be. It's highly unlikely that people would agree to do this; however, it is the only plausible way to end the conflict.

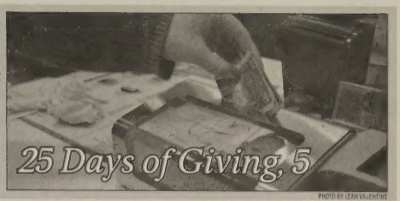


PHOTO BY LEAH VALENTINE

Role in big family equally stressful, rewarding

Students pressured to match sibling success, set good example as reputations are passed down

By William Ngo
Executive Editor

Throughout time, "The Brady Bunch," "Full House" and "Modern Family" have all depicted the perks of having a large family, purposely ending each episode with an inspirational, heartfelt life lesson. Those shows, however, are nothing except fictional portrayals; but for a handful of students, crowded homes, hand me downs and crammed cars are the reality.

Having a large family prevents dull moments in students' households, constantly bustling with activity, but being the oldest, youngest or the in-between born each offers its own small disadvantages.

Kathleen Landrigan (11), second oldest sibling between six others, recognizes a pre-determined idea which her peers and teachers obtain about her family.

"I don't really feel pressured to live up to the success that some of the other Landrigans have had, but I know that what I do could affect how the rest of the family is viewed," Landrigan said.

Students who have had brothers and sisters attend the school in previous years frequently face teachers who remind them of their successful predecessors. Like Landrigan, Aaron Natoli (9), the youngest of five, follows the footsteps of his older siblings.

"My dad just always wants us to do well in school so we try to see who's the best at school," Natoli said. "I know I'm not the best because Andrew (Natoli) (11) is like a straight A+ student, so we all kind of compete for second."

The Natolis academically compete within themselves, comparing grades in a playful manner, according to Natoli. In his and Cassidy Sheehan's (12) case, it is often easy to feel the pressure of excelling like their older siblings.

"Since I have been deciding where to go to college, my parents are urging me to go away like my sister and explore the college life," Sheehan said.

Because her sister moved out, leaving her as the older child in the household, Sheehan now cares for her three younger siblings. This responsibility includes driving them around places and helping out with homework; both duties force Sheehan to rearrange plans and neglect her own work. The sometimes stressful job, nonetheless, allows her to step up and take on a leadership position.

Landrigan, as well, strives to help her family by being a good role model through teaching good work ethic and acting responsibly. Though she herself influences her younger siblings, she continues to look up to her older brother, Luke Landrigan (12) for guidance and support.

"More space would be nice, but I love always having people to talk to and never getting bored," Landrigan said.

While it may seem like a growing pain, growing up with a large family ultimately allows lasting friendships and bonds apart from school.

"When (my siblings) leave to go somewhere and it's just me and my parents, I usually just sit there and do nothing," Natoli said. "Then I realize how much I depend on them to be there to do something, to make conversation with."

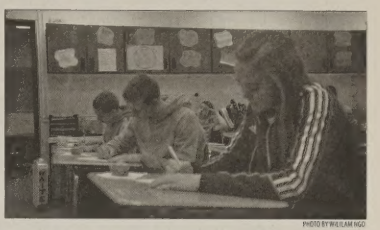


PHOTO BY WILLIAM NGO

Kathleen Landrigan (11) and brother Luke Landrigan (12) take a Latin test beside cousin Ben Landrigan (12) in their shared class.

Unfortunately, cramming everyone into the car cannot be as comedic nor lighthearted as television depicts– and sometimes requires two separate vehicles in the end–but the memories made during those car rides will surely stick with children for a lifetime.

"I love having a big family," Sheehan said. "I think we have more fun, and I wouldn't change it for the world."

A Dash of Dedication

PHOTO BY MEGAN BUTLER

Owners of businesses in culinery field learn to manage finances, prepare for futures

By Jessica Tebben
Life Editor

The chefs and bakers at the school are measuring and mixing their way through high school, often making more than just a hobby out of their unique abilities to make pastries and dishes look just as good as they taste.

The seemingly easy task of baking and cooking is taken to another level of difficulty, dedicating much of their out-of-school lives to their passion.

According to Nicholas Borror (12) a chef at the school, there is a significant difference between cooking and baking. Pastries such as cakes and cupcakes are a result of baking and are made mostly in the oven, while cooking has other aspects and results in dishes that one can find in restaurants.

Whether baking or cooking, students who participate in the culinary arts tend to make more out of their skill than just doing it for fun.

"(Baking) has kind of taught me about hard work because I actually sell the cakes, (...) so I kind of learned a lot about entrepreneurship and making my own money, and that sort of thing, so that's helped my work ethic," Madison Moore (11), baker, said.

Like Moore, Alyssa Gentry (11) sells her delicious creations in her business called Alyssa's Bakes. While running a business is a fun way to make money and helps with time management skills, the process can also be difficult.

"(The hardest part) is probably managing the money, like setting prices and different things according to how much my ingredients cost," Gentry said. "That can be difficult to figure out how to make a profit but still make it reasonable."

> "(Baking) has kind of taught me about hard work because I actually sell the cakes (...)."
>
> **MADISON MOORE (11)**
> *Student Baker*

Although Moore can see her passion for baking going far as a hobby, both Gentry and Borror plan to continue cooking and baking on a higher level. Both are planning on attending culinary arts schools and would like to make a career out of their hobbies in the future.

"It takes a lot of internships and shadowing," Borror said. "I recently just went to talk to the head chef of Chop's, and he's offering me a position there in January."

Despite the bright futures of these culinary prodigies, cooking and baking is not always as easy as it seems and is more than just following directions on the back of a box.

"(A negative to baking) is probably time management because a lot of times things go wrong that you don't expect," Gentry said. "Like you don't hear the time and something burns, so then you have to start all over, so you have to make sure that you allot enough time for error."

Baking and cooking is often stressful, but Gentry describes the process as "therapeutic" and all three students agree that seeing the final product is always satisfying.

"I just like the feeling when you finally finish whatever you made and you can look at it and eat it and it's just a good feeling when everything's finished," Moore said.

Most may think that baking and cooking is simply for others to enjoy, but many chefs and bakers also make things that they not only enjoy to eat, but also to bake.

"I really like the meal I made for my semi group last Saturday," Borror said. "I made eight different plates and (the main dish) was filet mignon with fettuccine alfredo."

No matter what the reason for measuring and mixing, the bakers and chefs of the school can agree that the final outcomes of their culinary ventures are more than just something to eat.

"(Presentation) is everything," Borror said. "I don't think of cooking as just food; I think of it as art. So it has to look pretty or else I won't serve it."

Students struggle with winter clothing choices

Despite warm indoor temperatures, cold, snowy weather makes finding comfortable wardrobe difficult

By Mallory McCauley
Writer

Around the school students can be seen wearing shorts and t-shirts on a daily basis in freezing winter weather. Some students feel the attire is comfortable, while others feel it is off-putting to see such in cold weather.

"I think (wearing shorts in the winter is) impractical," Sammi Warner (10) said. "People wear summer clothes and complain about being cold. People complain in the winter when they get sick."

With different people come different preferences, naturally. Some students love to be bundled up and warm during the winter and often arrive to school in scarves, combat boots or cardigans.

However, some students love to wear the clothes which make them comfortable in spite of the weather.

"I guess the weather doesn't really bother me, and I feel comfortable in shorts," Austin Shroyer (10) said.

Of the popular winter trends around the school, some include oversized cardigans paired with yoga leggings and combat boots for girls and beanies and hoodies for guys.

"I like scarves - I have four - and oversized cardigans for girls," Warner said. "For guys I like beanies."

Those who tend to wear shorts in the winter may experience a bit of a cold bite as they walk out to the harsh winter weather.

"I have to dress warm because I can't stand the cold," Isaiah Anderson (10) said.

Dressing in long sleeves and jeans doesn't just appeal to students because of the warmth, but also because of fashion.

"I love all of the winter trends, and dressing in winter clothes is my favorite," Maddie Doerffler (10) said.

Although it may be freezing outside, it isn't inside. This reasoning is why some students are neutral to the idea of wearing clothes meant for warm weather in the winter.

"I'm only outside for a maximum of two minutes and sometimes I want to wear a dress in the winter, so I figure it isn't that bad anyway," Arden Sidel (10) said.

Students often feel that along with the weather, the temperature inside the school is chilly, providing them with even more incentive to dress warm.

"I'm always freezing in school, so when winter comes around, I love wearing warm clothes," Sidel said.

"Being cold keeps me distracted, but if I'm warm in school, I can focus."

Students show not only an aversion to winter fashion, but winter weather.

"I hate the cold," Warner said. "So I guess warm clothes are the only way I survive."

The majority of the students wearing shorts during winter is guys, despite the fact that layering is in vogue for guys.

"I think that it looks good when guys layer their clothes or wear cardigans," Warner said.

Layering trends for guys this winter include cardigans over t-shirts or jackets over t-shirts.

"It's all up to the individual to decide what they wear, but I think for the winter it is best to stay warm and wear warm clothes," Doerffler said.

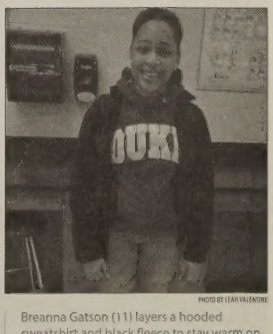


PHOTO BY LEAH VALENTINE

Breanna Gatson (11) layers a hooded sweatshirt and black fleece to stay warm on her trips to and from school.

Parents focus on mantaining magic of Christmas more than children

As I've grown up, I've noticed something offbeat yet amazing about my mother. She likes to dream, and she especially enjoys keeping the joys of Christmas alive.

My mom never directly told me that Santa Claus is not a real person, or rather, that she was the infamous gift-giver all along. I figured it out myself through a long story of an inconsistency in the media's interpretations of Santa Claus and my mother's interpretation. Whether I had found out or not, I have a hunch that she would have never told me the truth about St. Nick.

Ignoring the overprotective mom side, perhaps one of the most wonderful things about my mother is her willingness to hold onto the magic of Santa Claus, refusing to believe that he is simply a figment of a child's imagination thought up by adults who wanted to keep their kids in line.

JESS SAYIN'

JESSICA TEBBEN
Life Editor

When she tells me that she still believes in Santa, I ask her how she can believe something that she contradicts every year on Christmas Eve by buying "Santa gifts" and putting them under the tree. I am often bewildered by the way she still perseveres in her belief after she watches my dad eat the cookie she makes us set out for Santa. I wonder if she felt disappointed when she wrote letters from Santa to me and my siblings and set them out for us to open on Christmas morning.

Her answer is always the same. She never felt disappointed because – news flash – she doesn't believe that Santa is a real person at all. No, Santa does not come to everyone's house on Christmas Eve, and no, he doesn't live in the North Pole.

When I question her belief, she tells me that Santa does not take a bodily form, but rather takes the form of a whole community who works together to keep the spirit of St. Nick alive. Santa is in the mall workers who dress up and let little kids tell them what they want for Christmas. Santa is in the kids who found out the bad news too soon, but didn't go and tell their friends because they don't want the magic to be ruined for them, too.

Basically, what she tells me is that Santa Claus is everyone who keeps the fire of Christmas burning and the tradition of the magic alive. She encourages me to be a person who takes Christmas and makes it better by being a good sport about Christmas music and early decorations at Walmart.

The best thing about this characteristic is my mom is not the only one who possesses it. Even though they often claim not to, adults find enjoyment in bringing Santa to life, whether in movies or on the roofs or in their driveways. Adults may seem like dream-crushers and incessant pesterers, but one of their virtues is their ability to continue signing "Santa" on the gifts under the tree for years after their children have stopped believing.

Moms are especially sensitive to the whole 'when should I tell my kids Santa isn't real?' dilemma. I had to force my own mother to tell my eleven-year-old sister that Santa is not and never has been real. Let's just say it was tough on both of them.

Perhaps I'm more like my dad, who wanted to ruin the magic for me in second grade.

I can only imagine that this is how all households are, with one parent all gung-ho about Christmas and one who can't stand to put the Christmas lights up. I guess you could say he's the Grinch of the family, but I say he's just going with the flow.

Overall, my mom will never give up Christmas. Not for logic. Not for the sake of truth. Not for anyone.

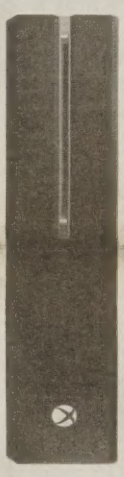
My mother once admitted to me that she still sometimes hopes for a gift wrapped perfectly under the tree, signed by Santa Claus. The real Santa Claus. I know this sounds cheesy, but Christmas is a seriously cheesy holiday. I hope that one day I can hold onto hope like my mom does and continue spreading Christmas cheer.

PHOTO BY REAGAN MARCELL

Release of the new Xbox One and Ps4 causes controversy for gamers

BY AWBREI VACHON
Writer

This past November, Microsoft and Sony released two major game consoles to the public, both having undergone immense improvements and changes since the last consoles were let out in 2005 and 2006. Gamers from everywhere lined up on the launch nights to be the first to purchase these new high-tech gaming systems and check out all of the great features and exclusive games provided with each. These two consoles are the popular Xbox One and PlayStation 4.



Both companies have improved their products to an impressive extent, but there is an international debate on whether or not one console is better than the other. The Xbox One and PS4 have appealing features, but each system has its downsides, too.

For starters, the Xbox One is priced at about $499, whereas the PS4 costs about $399. With such a steep price difference, it would seem logical that the Playstation would outsell the Xbox. It is up to the buyer, however, to decide if the console's value is worth the set price.

"I prefer the Xbox," Quinn Meyer (12) said. "I like the controllers better, (and) it has more multimedia in it too."

On top of just gaming, the Xbox One's multimedia feature offers things like Netflix, Skype, Twitter and a way for gamers to hook up their console to their cable box and watch TV shows and movies right through the system. Not to mention, the Xbox One allows a person to multitask; where he or she can do two of those things at once. However, the customer is still required to be a Gold Member in order to access the majority of those things.

"The Xbox is $100 more, but I think it's worth it because it comes with the Kinect, rather than buying an attachment for the PS4, which pretty much adds up to the same price anyways," Meyer said.

Kinect can be turned on and worked vocally as well as by body motions, but not always as well as one might hope. Occasionally Kinect is unable to register what it is being told to do, creating an inconvenience for the gamer.

The PlayStation 4, on the other hand, does not have that problem. The PS4 is a lot smaller and sleeker, has great graphics and although it does not come with Kinect, it still offers a lot of the same features the Xbox One does, like Netflix and live streaming.

"You can live stream your game play to websites like Twitch," Derek Meneely (11) said. "You hit a button on your controller and you can be streaming online and people from anywhere in the world can just get on a computer and they can watch you play."

The PS4 also downloads things a lot faster than the PS3 did, and allows the gamer to be downloading something while they do other things on the console.

Both consoles have exclusive games. For example, Xbox has Halo and PlayStation has Uncharted. Major games like Call of Duty, Battlefield and Madden are not exclusive to either game system and are thus enjoyed by a wide range of gamers – whether they have the Xbox or the PlayStation.

When it comes down to it, most gamers agree it is solely about preference. Whichever a person has grown accustomed to is generally the one he or she will lean towards. One console is not factually better.

"People can get pretty worked up about (which one's better)," Meneely said. "(But) I don't really think people need to fight about (it); if you're happy with what you have, just let other people be happy with what they have."

DIGITAL GETDOWN

Xbox One		PS4
PRICE: $499	VS.	PRICE: $399
PREORDERS: 525,000		PREORDERS: 725,000
TOTAL SOLD: 2 MILLION		TOTAL SOLD: 2.1 MILLION

SOURCE: FORBES.COM

25 Days of Giving builds character

Family tradition of random acts of kindness sparks holiday spirit

BY SARAH CAMINO
Writer

Although the holiday season is known as a time to celebrate giving, there are few people that truly take this idea to heart.

Although one trip to the soup kitchen or baking cookies for a friend may seem easy, Kelsi Brown (10) and her family created and participate in 25 acts of random kindness throughout December.

▶1178
people have an email subscription to receive more updates about 25 Days of Giving.
SOURCE: IMPACT52.ORG

Their program, known as 25 days of giving, aims to promote community involvement by encouraging people to spread joy through small service projects.

"25 days of giving is doing 25 random acts of kindness throughout the month of December to make a difference in someone's life," Erica Brown, Kelsi's mother, said. "Sometimes we forget that the smallest kind gesture, such as giving a child a balloon or buying someone a cup of coffee, can make a huge impact on someone."

Created by Aaron Brown, Kelsi's father, the tradition began as a simple way to teach his family the value of community service.

However, 25 days of giving has grown into something larger than only one family.

Recently, the Browns appeared on 21 Alive's INsight to discuss 25 days of giving and their new book, "Linnie Mae's New Friends," a fictional story encouraging children to become involved in helping others.

"As a family, we decided that we needed to do more for others," Aaron said. "The family that serves together grows together, and Erica and I wanted to teach our daughters the importance for caring for others–that the world is bigger than 'me.'"

In part, the program is about taking responsibility for the well-being of the community and its members. The Browns firmly believe that anyone can make a difference, even if his actions may seem small.

"It is important to give back to the community in which we live," Erica said. "It is everyone's responsibility to take care of the community and we can all take part in making it a better place."

According to a schedule posted on the Impact 52 blog, each day is dedicated to a specific act of giving. These actions include showing a teacher your appreciation, paying for someone's meal in a drive through or volunteering time to help the homeless in Fort Wayne.

"I am looking forward to helping the homeless this month because I haven't been able (yet) due to my busy schedule," Kelsi said. "I will be sacrificing one of my free nights to go out late and give the homeless materials to get them by during the cold winter."

The Browns document their service projects through social media, including Instagram, Twitter and Facebook.

> "The best part of community service is just getting that warm feeling inside because you know that you are chancing the lives of others. I love sharing my family's story because it is something so unique, and it stands out and makes a difference. I know that I will be serving my community for the rest of my life."
>
> **KELSI BROWN (10)**
> *Volunteer*

Aaron also writes about each day on a blog, with other family members occasionally offering their view about the day's endeavor.

"You can find us on our blog, Impact52.org or our Twiter and Instagram @Impact52," Kelsi said. "It's not too late to get involved!"

Although the 25 days of giving are intended to benefit community members in need, the Brown family still recognizes that service causes everyone involved to grow from the experience.

"The best part of community service is just getting that warm feeling inside because you know that you are changing the lives of others," Kelsi said. "I love sharing my family's story because it is something so unique, and it stands out and makes a difference. I know that I will be serving my community for the rest of my life."

PHOTO BY MEGAN BUTLER

PHOTOS BY WILLIAM NGO

GOINGBACKSTRONG

Life-threatening accident draws support from peers and community

BY ADAM SWIATKOWSKI
Writer

The feeling of years of a beloved sport coming to an end is frightening and unthinkable. For wrestler Nick Gogos (9), that feeling came much too unexpectedly.

At a wrestling tournament at Warsaw High School, Gogos was playing in his third match of the day, but suffered a severe spinal cord injury during a bout with an East-side High School wrestler.

Gogos' opponent lifted him off the wrestling mat and illegally slammed him to the ground; Gogos landed awkwardly on his neck, and afterwards, simply could not get up.

"I couldn't feel a thing in those first moments, my limbs were all limp," Gogos said. "The only things I could feel were my eyes and my mouth, but I couldn't move. A minute felt like 30 minutes to me, and I feared I was paralyzed for life."

Through the first harrowing moments, wrestling coaches, athletic trainers and an EMT went to the mat to help Gogos while his family remained in the stands, in shock of the injury.

"I was definitely scared, I have been around the sport for a really long time but I have never seen an injury quite like (Gogos')," Nathan DeVaux, head wrestling coach, said. "When something like this happens, it's a shock, and it took everyone by surprise. At that point, we were only concerned for his health."

> "The only things I could feel were my eyes and my mouth, but I couldn't move. A minute felt like 30 minutes to me, and I feared I was paralyzed for life."
>
> **NICK GOGOS (9)**
> *Recovering Wrestler*

Now focusing solely on recovery, Gogos has begun rehabilitation at Lutheran Hospital, going through daily therapy sessions lasting a few hours to slowly improve his muscle function.

"I have three to four hours of therapy daily, but to get through it I have to keep a clear and open mind and (remain) optimistic," Gogos said. "I know I have to make the best of my situation. (This experience) has changed my life; it's humbled me out, and it's made me enjoy the little and simple things in life."

After his injury, Gogos was taken to the Intensive Care Unit and received neck surgery to replace broken vertebrae in his spinal cord.

Gogos' doctors expect a full recovery, but it may take a period of many months as Gogos regains movement in various limbs and lost muscle tissue.

"My doctors expect for me to be out (of rehabilitation) near Christmas, and I'm set on Christmas Eve," Gogos said. "But it will be weeks and months of therapy to recover; it's like my body starting over again. It's very annoying; I can't do the things I always do. And when you tell your arm to lift up but it won't lift up, it's extremely frustrating. But it takes time, and I will eventually come back."

Though confined to his bed for most of the day, Gogos has made significant progress and is just starting to walk and move his hands more. Even though a full recovery is expected, Gogos will not see any more wrestling in the future.

"After an event like this, I plan not to wrestle or do any contact sports. My injury ruined my plans with wrestling, and if some other injury occurred, I will be paralyzed," Gogos said. "I may start running or play tennis, but I plan to take it easy. If something happens again, I could be done with all sports."

With so much therapy and rehabilitation for Gogos, his fellow wrestlers and friends have dedicated themselves to bring him support through the recovery process.

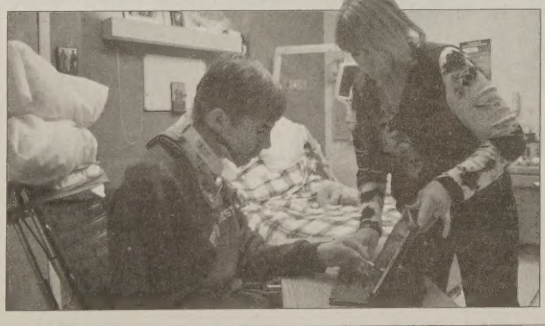
Vince Rosales (9), a wrestler, and Evan Elston (9), Gogos' friend, initially thought of raising some money by selling bracelets inscribed with "Gogos Strong" to buy a guitar for Gogos to help him pass the time while in rehabilitation.

The two, however, have seen the effort exceed their expectations, so far selling over 1500 bracelets.

"I talked to my parents the night of (Gogos') injury, and I wanted to do something to help him; playing guitar is his first love, and I wanted to buy him one. That's how the "Gogos Strong" bracelet was (thought) up," Rosales said. "But it is not just about the bracelet, it is really more about the donations and support given to the Gogos family."

For Gogos, the support is needed to motivate him to come back from the injury. The backing from his fellow wrestlers, students and members of the community alike have been powerful.

"I want to tell everyone that I am very thankful for all of the prayers that are being said and for all of the support my family and I have been given," Gogos said. "It's what will get me through this."



Top: Nick Gogos (9) reads a chain of positive messages written by students from Lafayette Meadows, which he attended as a child. Left: Gogos' mother helps prep an iPad for him to use. Simple everyday tasks like that and putting on clothes require assistance. Right: Gogos holds his personal guitar which was funded by the "Gogos Strong" movement.

No time or place for breaks throughout winter break

Teams keep practicing despite holiday season in order to 'not get rusty'

BY ETHAN YDE
Writer

Although winter break is a time to rest from school, it is not a time to rest from sports. Teams including the swim, dance, basketball, gymnastics and wrestling teams hold mandatory practices and games over the course of the two week break.

"Winter training is a bittersweet time for a swimmer," Hayden Nowak (10) said. "Christmas and New Years are around the corner and the practices get harder and harder by the days, but it's our teammates that allow us to keep a sense of mind and survive the most grueling 2 weeks of our season."

Many training regimens include increases in frequency, intensity and overall time put into the sport. The teams get together the most during these times because they have the ability to focus without school distractions are able to achieve goals of team bonding and cohesiveness.

"Winter training isn't only to increase physical fitness but to make the entirety of the team closer emotionally," Nowak said. "It is what makes our team who we are in the late year meets such as conference and sectionals.

These athletes are putting their complete energy into each sport. It takes true motivation from teammates and the coach in order to make such a commitment. Academics come to an end over break, but athletics are far from one.

"Our coach has high expectations for us and doesn't consider winter break as an excuse to fall behind in our dances," Adrienne Schwartz (11), dancer said. "Over break we work extra hard at our mandatory practices to make (Coach) Britney proud because she is like a mom to us."

Not only do players train for their current sports but also some off-season athletes put extra time into their sport over break. This includes independent training at the YMCA, but also group classes at places like Athletes With Purpose. Some people, including John Lutz (9) have found other ways of practicing without the available team practices.

"I train in tennis over the winter at Wildwood because I want to make sure that my abilities do not get rusty and that I stay on top of the game all year long," Lutz said. "Also, I need to work all year in order to train for the tennis team next fall."

Winter training is a stage in a season in which the athlete is able to go by a strict team schedule or set up their own independently.

The schedule established can be beneficial, depending on the amount of time and dedication put into the sport. Whether an athlete is working for a team or training to make one, it is important to put in time to a sport when possible.

Winter training helps strengthen the athletes mentally and physically, giving them a competitive edge during competition. What cannot be accomplished in a sport during the school year can always be accomplished when given the time and resources to make it possible.

BUILDING THE GAME

While it may be perceived as a scientific breakthrough, the concept of muscle memory is only a seemingly credible fabrication. While student athletes continue to practice, their muscles will not remember a motion; rather, their brains will recall a motor skill, allowing the same actions to reoccur.

How to build muscle memory:

1. Practice a new skill in a blocked environment.

2. Improve the skill in a variable environment.

3. Perfect the same skill in a random environment.

SOURCE: LIVESTRONG.COM

Arena field trip leaves doubts of ability to succeed

When I was in fourth grade at Deer Ridge Elementary School, Mrs. Williams' class of 24 piled onto the bus and headed to the Bankers Life Fieldhouse in Indianapolis for a field trip. We were due for a tour of the arena–the tunnel where the Pacers huddled under before games, their locker rooms and of course, a court side view of the majestic floor.

This adventure was any little boy or girl's dream who had ever sat alongside their parents watching an NBA game on television.

I was not particularly a Pacers fan, but growing up in a home where basketball stats and games were highly celebrated, I was ecstatic to experience one of the NBA's most revered arenas.

HAIDEN'S HAVEN

HAIDEN STEINGASS
Sports Editor

The squeak of my sneakers on the floor as I stepped onto the court was exactly what I imagined, and the stadium in its entirety seemed larger than life in its empty state. The perfection of the immaculately lined bleachers seemed far too intimidating to use as seating. I visualized the roar of fans and the dribbling of basketballs, but the strange silence of the vacant court surpassed my daydream.

Even though my frilly attire must have been identical to the other girls, it seemed as though I was one of the only females to be somewhat eager for the tour.

A short, gray-haired man dressed in a Nike sweat suit appeared in front of us. I cannot remember his name or the bulk of the Pacers' historical information which he fed to us. Nonetheless, the excursion met my expectations until the discomforting conclusion.

Those few minutes of breathing the crisp, open air of the arena seemed magical until we were guided to the less than exciting locker rooms. The man began to tell us the ins and outs of the hectic lifestyle of a professional basketball player and concluded by asking the group of tired, starving and somewhat annoyed children if they had any questions. One outspoken boy shot his hand up and asked a question to spark the topic of being drafted into the NBA.

The man took a deep breath and looked down. He responded with, "None of you will ever become professional basketball players. Unfortunately, the chances are so slim that it just won't happen to any of you."

The mood went from electric to depressing in a matter of seconds, and somehow, I can still visualize this moment and the uneasiness which followed. Among the first time experience of visiting an NBA stadium, this was the first time I had ever witnessed someone saying I could not do something. To hear a stranger doubt me brought out my inner obstinacy.

A following, more positive image burned into my memory, was a day at Deer Ridge succeeding the field trip. Mrs. Williams gathered our class with a discomforting look on her face.

She explained how upset she was about our tour guide from the stadium told us we did not have the ability to do something. She said it was not acceptable for the man to talk to children in that manner, but more importantly it was wrong to fill our minds with self-doubt, no matter how unlikely the task at hand.

Despite this, I have not forgotten the way it made me feel or the nurturing words of my teacher which followed.

I have always had faith in opportunities, even the nearly impossible ones. Practically 450 people have a place in the NBA, roughly 40,000 people have a place in the Olympic Games and approximately 18,000 people have a place as some kind of professional athlete in the country. Despite all odds, there is no reason to allow someone's words to shut the door on an improbable outcome.

More importantly, there is no reason to shut the door on your own dreams simply because you do not feel that limited place could be yours.

AT THE TIP TOP

Basketball team finds motivation through fans and dunking skills

BY TESSA LUTZ
Social Media Manager

With great power comes great responsibility, and the boys basketball team faces these responsibilities every time they step out on the court. Although the team members did not have the strongest start to their season, they plan to move forward and put the past behind them.

"We had a minor setback in our opening game (when) we lost to Huntington North, but we have fixed those problems and are improving every week," Dana Batt (10), varsity basketball player, said.

The future is bright, and the team has upped its game with some awe-inspiring moves and striking plays, including the notorious dunk.

"Dunking is definitely a game changing moment. (It is) just the icing on the cake. It gets the crowd involved and makes a statement."

LUKE COOPER (11)
Varsity Player

PHOTO BY REAGAN MINSELL

This year's team has managed to dunk more in the beginning of the season than last year's team was able to in their season in its entirety.

"All you have to be able to do in jump high enough to get your hand and the ball above the rim," Batt said. "There are various things you can do to make a 'better' dunk, like cocking the ball back and really slamming it through the rim, hence the term slam dunk."

In accordance with Batt, varsity basketball player Luke Cooper (11) agrees dunking changes the dynamic in a game, and is not only done for show.

"Dunking is definitely a game changing moment," Cooper said, "(It is) just the icing on the cake. It gets the crowd involved and makes a statement."

Getting the crowd involved in the games is very important to the team. The fans want to share in the boy's success and share in the excitement of the game.

"(Student section) is there to support (the) team and act as the sixth man on the court," Alex Weaver (12), student section leader and dunking enthusiast, said.

The student section is not only a place where fellow Spartans can come to bond and cheer their team on, but it serves as momentum and as an important aspect to their victories and accomplishments.

"Without the support by both the team and the fans, especially the student section, the incredible atmosphere that we get to play in every week would be nonexistent," Cooper said.

The ambiance created in the gym is important to the outcome of the night.

"I think the student section really helps fuel the hype in our games; we can feed off their energy and translate that into our play," Batt said. "It's also awesome when the band shows up at our games because it packs the stands, and the gym gets ridiculously loud."

At the end of the day, regardless of whether the boys win or lose, they hold a strong bond and brotherhood.

"Every player of the team holds a valuable worth, from starters to role players we all know that our names could be called at any second and we really embrace that for the benefit of the team," Cooper said.

Standing at 6'8", Caleb Swanigan (10) performs a dunk during a team practice. This year is Swanigan's second year on varsity.

Tumblers to strategize for state

Absence of veteran members fails impede teams overall improvement

BY SYDNEY ISROFF
Business Manager

As the season begins for the girls gymnastic team, changes are being put in place which differ from years in the past. With two of its main athletes no longer on the team, the girls have plans to work harder this year to achieve the goals they have set for themselves.

Although there is a shortage of veteran team members, the girls do not expect this to set them back at upcoming meets. The team plans to work hard to make it far this season; despite previous tribulations, the athletes have high expectations.

"This year we have some different strategies that we are going to be going into the meets with," Taylor Ross (11) said.

The girls practiced during the summer in anticipation for the season with the hopes to prove its talent and determination.

With new strategies set in place earlier in the year, the athletes have a head start into the season.

"I am looking forward to going into the meets and being able to compete the new skills that we have all been working on all summer," Ross said.

This year's freshmen, Katelynn Chaffee and Gwen Middleton, have joined the team, adding depth and more experience.

"We have two new freshmen that are going to be really beneficial to our team," Sophie Tsiguloff (11) said.

As freshmen, the girls are not only getting used to high school academics, but also managing these trials with sports.

"There are a lot of practices, so it is kind of hard to keep up with all of the school work," Chaffee said.

Like any incoming freshman, the girls learn how hectic school sport teams can be, but focusing on their upcoming season falls as a top priority. The practice of new strategies and the arrival of new team members encourages the team to work harder than ever and to create new strategies.

"I am looking forward to the end of season when we get to compete at state," Tsiguloff said.

As preparation for the meets, the girls have become extremely selective about doing everything as perfect as possible and to their full potential.

This way, when competition days arrive, the repetitious nature of gymnastics will come easily, and the team's expectancies can be met. The first meet of the season is against Snider High School on Jan. 16. To prepare for meets, there is a practice meet on Jan. 4.

With practices and meets set in stone, the girls believe to be equipped with necessary skills and notions to dominate competition and start their season out with a victory at Snider.

PHOTO BY MEGAN BUTLER

Kirsten Nicole (12) watches Kiersten Seitz (12) as she performs a trick. Gymnastics team practices in the academy gym.

BALANCING IT OUT

At competitions, the gymnasts can compete as a team or individually. Athletes are given difficulty and execution scores which are then added together for a final point total. The team competes in all of the following events:

Floor | Uneven Bars | Vault | Beam

ILLUSTRATION BY WILLIAM KOO

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SAPPY new year

Failures to fulfill resolutions outweigh number of successes

By Allie Nelson
Executive Editor

If only goals were fulfilled simply by mentioning them minutes before the falling of a technicolor ball in Times Square. If only those ten pounds were shed. If only the morning coffee-run habit was curbed, or the entire first floor reorganized.

Unfortunately, New Year's Resolutions have become just another holiday tradition, a hope to do better, a potential fresh start.

For some, resolutions can provide the inspiration nonexistent during any other time of the year. For others, resolutions represent an opportunity for self-improvement companies to get ahead and a source of guilt if they are not completed.

"(New Year's resolutions) could help if people followed through with them, but I think a lot of time people don't even follow through with them just like how I can't even remember mine," Hattie Ritchie (12) said.

Not only can these aims be ineffective, but high hopes can go unfinished, leaving the aspirant feeling worse than before.

"I honestly have never set a New Year's resolution because I realize no one's going to keep true to them, so I don't want to set myself up for failure and guilt," Grant Bastin (11) said.

Some, however, see the letdown as a consequence of choices made before the resolution was announced, arguing any plan toward self-improvement cannot be harmful.

"If you're trying to improve upon yourself, then you're doing something right, but if that behavior brings other people down around you normally, then that guilt is just a product of that normally bad behavior," Jay Greenlee (11) said.

Seemingly more beneficial to the economy than to the goal-setters, resolutions cause organizations, which thrive on those determined to self-improve, to increase profit at the turn of the year.

Gym usage increases by 20 percent in the month of January alone, according to huffingtonpost.com. Their seemingly single mission to aid in fitness or any form of personal enhancement is offset by their push to persuade consumers. These industries rely on this prosperous time of year.

However, these companies do not necessarily count on those who quit. Fitness facilities emphasize the importance of long-term determination to maintain health and the spike in memberships may just be a natural result rather than an intentional economic target.

Whether the practice is a motivator or a business campaign, in order for aspirations to be fulfilled, the goal must be worthy to remain relevant throughout the year.

"Setting goals can be beneficial if it's more of a short term goal. When people set them and fail, it's because it's long term and it's less important," Bastin said. "If goals are more important or are more short term, the commitment for the full year is possible."

Despite their potential repercussions, when used loosely, New Year's resolutions inspire some to change into the person they want to be. Rather than creating one resolution, they can have a goal in mind and attempt to have objectives which follow their principles.

"New Year's resolutions only get that term because the changing of the year represents a monumental change in time that allows people retrospect of their lives, but I feel like at any moment throughout the year if you have a goal to do something you should do it," Greenlee said.

When created realistically, New Year's resolutions can serve to remind people of where they desire to eventually be. If set too high, they can fail. If not modified, they can trigger regret.

> "(To achieve goals) you have to look back before you look forward. Realize how you are going to become a better you as time moves on."
>
> **JAY GREENLEE (11)**
> *Realistic Goal-setter*

However, the perfect ideology behind establishing an objective and following it completely is unreasonable living in a world where mistakes are inevitable.

"You should strive to be better all the time not just because it's a new year," Ritchie said.

Frankly, the goal paired with the coming of the new year passes just as quickly as the celebratory festivities.

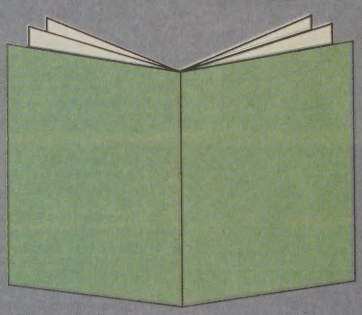
Whether the practice helps or hurts depends on the goal, but the objectives are forgotten progressively more and more as the twelve months slip away and that one "more important" thing always seems to arise.

Rather than just seeing the goal from the start of the year, people modify their ambitions. New Year's resolutions no longer hold the same significance they once did, and hopes still must be established to progress.

"(To achieve goals) you have to look back before you look forward," Greenlee said. "Realize how you are going to become a better you as time moves on."

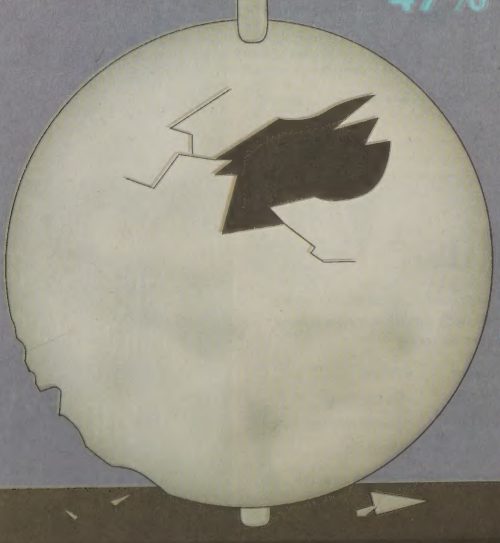
PHOTO BY KEAGAN MIESELL

Fitness gyms nationwide see their busiest times during the month of Jan.



38% of resolutions are related to weight.

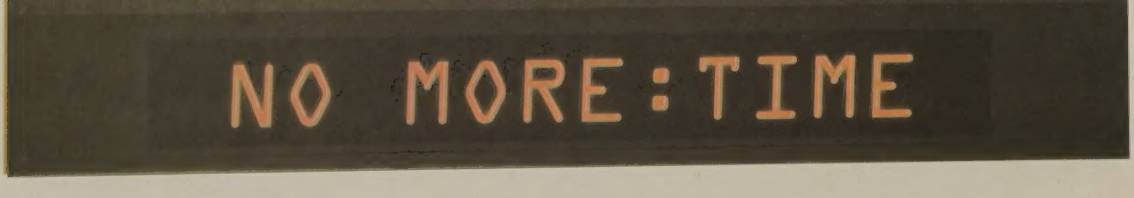
47% of resolutions are related to self-improvement or education.



34% of resolutions are related to money.

31% of resolutions are related to relationships.

SOURCE: STATISTICBRAIN.COM



the SPARTANA

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▶ NEWS The Spartan Alliance Band announces they will be participating in Bands of America, a national conference, beginning next fall. **1**

▶ OPINION Students voice concern over the lack of healthy food and abundance of junk food offered to students for lunch in the cafeteria. **3**

▶ LIFE With extra time on their hands, some students devote a large portion of their time watching Netflix, a medium that has taken over TV. **5**

▶ SPORTS Football and basketball teams look forward to the pending switch from the NHC to the SAC expected in the 2014-15 school year. **7**

▶ FEATURE Fewer students are planning to watch the upcoming winter Olympics compared those who watched the summer games. **8**

Friday, February 7, 2014 | A 2009 Pacemaker Winner | Homestead High School's News Source Since 196

PHOTO BY MEGAN BUTLER

Tori Hall (11) plays in the snow on her day off.

Severe weather closes schools

Students find extra time in winter, school year extended into summer

By Ian McKenzie
Copy Editor

With blizzard conditions dominating the Midwest on Jan. 6, much of the region was incapacitated for nearly a week. The snowstorm's far reaching effects shut down area schools for the entire following week, Southwest Allen County Schools (SACS) among them. Students, teachers and administrators alike had a three week winter vacation, for some elongating an unwelcome stay in a fortress of solitude and for others allowing prized time to do nothing and enjoy it.

"On a typical snow day, I go out and make as many snow angels as I possibly can in the lawn, the more the better," Vishal Narayan (12) said. "Sometimes, when the driveway needs to be cleared, I will snow-angel away all the snow."

Doubtlessly, countless other students find themselves looking for useless, entertaining activities to fritter the time away, but others view all of the schedule changes with a more pragmatic eye.

▶ SEE 'SNOW DAYS,' PAGE 2

PHOTO BY ALLIE NEHRING

Members of the color guard pose during the Spartan Alliance Marching Band's most recent 2013 fall show "The Night Circus" which went on to place 2nd at State.

Spartan Alliance Band to join Bands of America for 2014 season

By Katie Dunlap
News Editor

The Spartan Alliance Band has joined the Bands of America (BOA), a national organization of marching bands.

"Bands of America is most of the high performing high school marching bands in the U.S.," Arianna Papadakis(11) said. "They compete against each other throughout the season until nationals, the last competition of the season."

By joining BOA, the marching band will be partaking in a more competitive atmosphere as well as competing with bands from different states. Bands at this level tend to use larger props, so the scale of the Spartan Alliance Band's performance may increase.

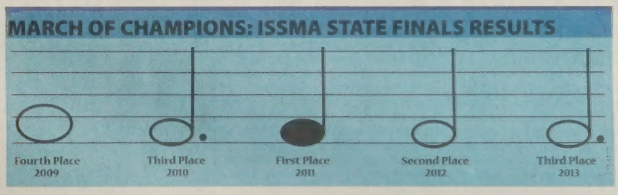
"The main difference is that they'll be playing on a national stage opposed to just state level with just Indiana marching bands," Rhonda Read, band parent, said. "They'll be playing with bands from Florida and Texas; all over the country. It will be a more widespread competition."

Being a member of BOA enables the Spartan Alliance Band to qualify for the national competition.

"In order to make it to nationals we have to rank high in state competition and be members of BOA," Papadakis said. "BOA is the next level for our band; being considered for nationals is an honor that no one recently in our program has had."

The band will get extra practice t i m e w h e n

▶ SEE 'BAND,' PAGE 2



SACS to decline snow day waiver

By Ethan Zweig
Writer

At the start of January, severe wind chills blasted Homestead, cancelling school for all four days that week. Due to the state of emergency, Indiana schools were offered a waiver for having to make up school days lost on Jan. 6 and 7, but Southwest Allen County Schools (SACS) has decided not to apply.

The four days, along with many more cancellations later in Jan., have already extended the school year into June. East Allen County Schools are planning to apply for the waiver, but SACS still remains wary.

"At this time, we are choosing to not apply for the waiver because we think it is important that students get as much *contact with their teachers*," Dr. Phil Downs, Associate Superintendent of SACS, said. "I think we owe it to you, and we owe it to your parents."

Although Downs seems to have made up his mind for now, some teachers feel neutral towards the subject.

"The waiver would not affect how I teach," Jamie Smith, English teacher, said in an email. "Most teachers can compensate in their lesson plans for missed days. Online access makes this much easier and more efficient. Without a doubt as much contact with students as possible is extremely important."

Many students believe that the district should apply for the waiver because the first few cancellations were necessary for keeping

▶13
School days have been canceled due to weather as of Feb. 6.

▶ SEE 'WAIVER,' PAGE 2

New advisers to oversee student government

By Katie Dunlap
News Editor

Alyssa Heggen, guidance counselor, and Amanda Eid, journalism teacher, are the new student government co-advisers, taking over at the beginning of the second semester. Their first meeting with student government was Wednesday, Jan. 15.

Heggen was approached with the opportunity after Sarah Wiley vacated the position at the end of the first semester.

"I decided to become involved in student government when Mrs. Bay approached me and shared that the student government is in need of an adviser," Heggen said. "I have always enjoyed working closely with the student body and thought this would be the perfect opportunity to get to know students at Homestead."

> "I have always enjoyed working closely with the student body and thought this would be the perfect opportunity to get to know students at Homestead."
>
> **ALYSSA HEGGEN**
> *Student Government Adviser*

Though she was not on student government in high school, Heggen is familiar with student-run organizations. At Indiana University, she was part of the Panhellenic Association, the student government that oversaw all 19 sororities. Heggen looks forward to

▶ SEE 'ADVISERS,' PAGE 2

No beverage policy altered

Administration allows drinks in class for second semester

By Megan Cater
Copy Editor

As students and teachers eased their way back into the second semester, a revised drink policy was a positive change to which to get accustomed. Prior to the conclusion of the first semester, Park Ginder, principal, made an announcement stating that beginning in the second semester of this year, bottled drinks would be allowed at school.

In the Homestead High School Parent/Student Handbook, it states "open drink containers are prohibited throughout the building from 7:45 a.m. to 2:35 p.m. Students may bring appropriate beverages in unopened containers to be consumed at lunch in the cafeteria. Students who require water throughout the day, due to a medical issue, must turn in a doctor's note to the nurse stating the time frame and reason they will need to carry water to their classes."

PHOTO BY REAGAN WAKEFIELD

Frank Meehan (10) sits in class with his water bottle close by. The new drink policy allows students to bring bottles to class as long as they have substantial lids, such as screw-on, and are not likely to spill if dropped.

"The (old) policy had been around for a while. According to the handbook, there were to be no drinks of any kind," Ginder said. "We had gotten to the point where so many students were asking for notes from the doctor to be able to have a drink and we just didn't feel that it was necessary to not have drinks. It's not a big distraction to have a drink."

Starting the second semester, students are allowed to bring in bottled drinks with a screw-on cap or any kind of hard container that has a screw on cap, according to Ginder.

▶ DRINK POLICY,' PAGE 2

BRIEFS

SAT RESCHEDULED
The Jan. 25 SAT that had been taking place at Homestead has been rescheduled for Feb. 8. Students are to be dropped off at Door 26 by the Freshmen Academy. If a student is unable to attend the test on Feb. 8, they are instructed to visit College Board in order to find another testing date.

BASKETBALL GAMES
Any patrons planning to attend any upcoming basketball games are requested to now arrive early in order to secure a seat. Once the gym has reached capacity the doors will be locked. Seats are available on a first come first serve basis. Those with season passes are not necessarily guaranteed a seat.

PRACTICE SAT/ACT EXAMS
The parent club is offering practice SAT and SAT exams scheduled to take place at 8 a.m. March 15 at Homestead High school. The cost is $33 per exam with multiple exams available. Student check-in begins at 8 a.m and the test will be over around 1:30 p.m. Registration packets are due Feb. 28.

GOGOS STRONG NIGHT
Nik Gogos (9) will be recognized on Feb. 13 at Gogos Strong Night. Gogos sustained a spinal injury during a wrestling match and has since made an impressive recovery. His hard work, determination, and overall progress will be recognized at this event. All are invited and encouraged to attend.

IPFW HONOR BAND
Congratulations to the following musicians participating in the IPFW Honor Band: Drew Atkinson (11), Chase Carter (10), Carl Fischer (11), Natalie Hawken (12), Christian Karkosky (11), Harrison Lippie (10), Stephen Mattson (11), William Pennington (10), Megan Read (12) and Denise Seifert (9).

▶SNOW DAYS CONTINUED FROM 1

Considering that, at press time, 12 of the past 23 scheduled school days had been canceled, it's a well-founded view to adopt in the doldrums of winter.

"I'd rather end when we are supposed to end (originally on May 29, now into the second week of June), because it's better to be outside in the summer when there is more to do," Luke Landrigan (12) said.

With the SACS school board initially deciding to bypass the waiver opportunity, the paring down of the summer becomes even more noticeable. In a nutshell, the waiver allows applying districts the opportunity to not have to make up the first two days of school (Jan. 7 and 8) that were canceled; until further notice, though, those days will be tacked onto the end of the year for SACS.

Though students must adjust their expectations for the end of the school year and invent ways to keep themselves busy, in the meantime the off-kilter nature of the beginning of the semester has likely affected teachers the most. Previously scheduled due dates, tests and lesson plans have been rescheduled and to this day remain volatile due to the suddenly capricious winter weather; slick roads, snow drifts, and lethal wind chills suddenly present a formidable barrier for students to attend school.

"Because I plan out two weeks in advance usually, I've had to rewrite my schedules about five times, (including) changing due dates," Bekki Vail, science teacher, said.

Though for most students the week off was a simple matter of looking for something to do, teachers of Advanced Placement (AP) classes especially were forced to plan around the snow days, a difficult task because of the ever-approaching, immoveable AP testing block which is in about three months. The first test is on May 5, continuing on through May 16.

As snow days are tacked on in June, each day between now and early May becomes a more and more precious commodity. Some teachers plan to tap into a reservoir of review time between the end of planned class time to cover curriculum and the AP test, while others have needed to resort to slightly more drastic means, such as Vail; in all, though, teachers have needed to adapt tirelessly to all of the burdensome weather.

"For AP Biology I've done online assignments through My Big Campus, (including) videos, podcasts, reading assignments, so that we don't fall behind (for the AP test)," Vail said.

PHOTO BY MEGAN BUTLER

Like many students, Tori Hall (11) spent some of her time off shoveling. The blizzard like conditions left many stuck inside their houses or cars.

HOMESTEAD DEBUNKED

Myth: The date for graduation will be pushed back from the original date of June 7 due to the multitude of snow days accumulated thus far.

Status: False. Plans for graduation have not been altered. Seniors will still be receiving their diplomas on June 7 at the Coliseum. Members of the graduating class will be expected to attend any school days that take place after graduation, which depends on the number of snow days the district gets up until that point.

"We will keep adding days to the school year but our event at the Coliseum will be unchanged," Park Ginder, principal, said. "Seniors will be required to come back to HHS for any snow days."

Despite the multitude of snow days due to frigid conditions and large amounts of snowfall, students will be in school until Monday, June 9, as of Feb. 5.

In a letter sent to seniors and their families, Ginder announced no matter how many additional snow days are added to the school calendar, seniors are required to attend the school days following graduation.

"Attendance on school days following the recognition ceremony will be mandatory," Ginder, in his letter to senior students, said. "Students choosing to walk in the recognition ceremony must understand that participation is not an indicator of completing all academic requirements. Diplomas will be awarded to students who have successfully met all graduation requirements."

The decision to not alter the plans for graduation was made in order to help families that made plans with the June 7 date in mind maintain their activities.

While the number of snow days piled up, Ginder and other administrators looked at several different alternate plans, but decided upon keeping the date of graduation intact.

"Mr. Ginder and the Homestead High School administrative team already have alternate plans in place," Steve Yager, superintendent, said. "Our intent is to keep the HHS graduation ceremonies at the Coliseum."

The date of graduation remains intact and will take place Saturday June 7 at 11 a.m. at the Allen County Memorial Coliseum.

--Katie Dunlap

▶ADVISERS CONTINUED FROM 1

using her experience to support student government.

"Right now I want to keep our student leaders at the forefront of student government," Heggen said. "Our student government currently consists of an excellent group of smart, motivated students who are invested in their school. At this point, my plan is to support them in their mission and be their advocate and adviser for the events they plan here at Homestead."

Members of student government have been impressed with Heggen.

"It's Ms. Heggen's first year as the student government adviser and she jumped in second semester at a crazy time for student government," Shelby Harkness, junior secretary, said. "I was half expecting her to be overwhelmed by all of the tasks we are still planning but she is very organized(...) She stepped up to take on a big role and a lot of extra work and she is handling it all really well."

Students also praise her organization skills, and believe they will help bring success

"Ms. Heggen was very organized and on top of things right off the bat, just like Ms.Wiley," Gaby Meissner, sophomore class president, said. "She seems determined to get things accomplished in a timely manner."

As the planning of many second semester events continue, student government members look forward to working closely with Heggen.

"I am really excited to continue working with Ms. Heggen and see what new and different ideas she has compared to Mrs. Wiley," Harkness said.

There are many exciting events on the horizon planned by student government.

"This semester I am very excited to see what the juniors have in store for prom," Meissner said. "However, Dirty Duckers, Notorious Netters, the variety show and MORP come first. I personally am excited to be judging auditions for the variety show and Mc'ing Dirty Duckers. We have tons of other exciting things in store this semester and I'm happy for Ms. Heggen to be on board."

As student government gets back into action, Heggen looks forward to fostering the traditional activities carried out over the second semester of the school year.

"Homestead is full of tradition both old and new such as Dirty Duckers, Prom and Senior Activities Day," Heggen said. "I am just excited to be able to help carry on these traditions so students enjoy their high school experience and become invested in their school."

Heggen encourages students that wish to get involved to talk to their representatives.

"There are a lot of things students can do to become involved in student government," Heggen said. "However, the most important thing students can do is share their thoughts and opinions with their class representatives. It's important that student voices are heard and student government is there to listen to those voices."

▶BAND CONTINUED FROM 1

they join this conference.

"The only major change will be that the kids will be out practicing an extra week around Halloween," Read said. "The Grand National Finals are Nov. 15, so they will have another two weeks of practice."

Members of the band are excited to move on to more difficult competition in BOA.

"I think it's really cool (the band is going to BOA Nationals)," Jacob Clond (12), band member, said. "It makes me wish I could go with them. I hope they can be the best band there next year. I know they can with enough work, but I also know it'll be fantastic for them no matter the outcome."

Transitioning into Bands of America will enrich the marching band, according to members.

"If anything, (being in this competition) will just make (the band) more determined to do well and (the instructors) will be more proud at the end," Clond said.

Upperclassmen will be key in making sure the transition into BOA is smooth for all members.

"Next year I will be a senior which means that I'm going to have to set a good example for our underclassmen and work as hard as possible," Papadakis said. "We will have two extra weeks of practice and competition and a lot more hard work. I am most excited about having two more weeks with the flutes; we have so much fun together and these extra two weeks will only bring us closer together."

PHOTO BY ALLIE HEMBREE

The Spartan Alliance Band stands ready before a performance in the fall of 2013.

Joining BOA gives the Spartan Alliance band more opportunities to achieve at a high level.

"It's great because if Homestead was to win, it would be more than just Indiana knowing what a great program Homestead is because it's a bunch of people all over the country," Read said.

Joining BOA will allow band members to be exposed to competition at a level closer to that of the state competition and will help them to assimilate to larger scale competitions.

"(Incoming freshmen) may be scared or nervous at first, but this will give them more chances to be out on Lucas Oil Stadium and will lessen the nerves at the end for state and nationals," Clond said.

As members of BOA, the Spartan Alliance band will graduate to a higher level of competition than what it has previously faced.

"(BOA is) just a bigger stage, which I think (the band is) very excited about," Read said. "You know how (the band is), they are very dedicated. They'll have a new goal to go for."

▶WAIVER CONTINUED FROM 1

the students safe.

"I believe we should have applied because school was canceled for the safety of the students due to the cold temperatures," Austin Motz (12) said. "The waiver would allow us to graduate on time, and would ensure that there are no days of busywork and AP exams would occur in their correct times."

A concern among both students and teachers is how AP classes are affected. While the school year is pushed back, AP final exams are not.

"We've had snow days in the past, and, in this case, you are only looking at two days that can be made up anyway," Downs said. "That's fairly standard in most years. And besides, the waiver wouldn't push back the AP date anyway. It would be after the AP test."

There is still the possibility that SACS may reconsider its decision on the waiver if more cancellations occur.

"(We might apply) if we get to the point where the last day of school is way into June (...), maybe out towards where graduation is or if it looks like it will push summer school further in July," Downs said.

The administration is keen on maintaining its 180 day school year, and will keep adding on days at the end of the year until the situation becomes dire.

"I am not sure that an assigned number of days in the school year is absolutely necessary," Smith said. "However, I do believe that the number of days allotted for each quarter helps students better prepare for quarterly and final exams. Hopefully, administrators will carefully consider where and when they add extra make-up days so that quarters within semesters are balanced."

Whether or not SACS applies for the waiver, administration is trying its hardest to do what is right for every student in the district.

▶DRINK POLICY CONTINUED FROM 1

"We don't want people bringing in a Dunkin' Donuts or a Starbucks coffee (...) in a paper cup that is likely to end up all over the floor," Ginder said. "Students can take drinks out of the cafeteria as well."

Although it is not breaking the school's rules, if a teacher says they do not want students to have drinks in their class, it is ultimately up to that teacher. Some students that work with expensive equipment or laptops may be restricted from drinking during classes.

"In all my college classes we are allowed to have any food or drinks, so having them in high school gives us one small responsibility that we might have in college," Sophia Rosenblum (12) said. "It's also more efficient for teachers because they don't have to go through the process of signing a pass for a student to go all the way to the water fountain during classes."

The upgrade from high school privileges to college privileges is small but important.

"We talked with teachers in the department chair meetings and it was agreed that it was time to make a change," Ginder said. "I looked at how we were enforcing the rule and how that expectation did or did not have an impact on what was going on in school. We just began having conversations (...) both administratively and with the teacher leaders (...); it was determined that it wasn't a big deal to let the students bring drinks."

Although the policy is new, teachers are noticing students are taking advantage of the change responsibly.

"My policy is as long as students have their lids on or they have the cap on their drink that's fine with me," Christy Shelby, FACS teacher, said. "There haven't been any problems as far as spills go so it hasn't been a big concern of mine. As long as they keep it away from their laptops it's not a big deal for me."

This new policy creates a college atmosphere and allows students to be comfortable and hydrated throughout the day.

"We don't expect students to abuse the privilege," Ginder said. "We were spending a lot of time policing something that didn't have a lot of impact on students or the environment."

the SPARTANA
STAFF & EDITORIAL POLICY 2013-2014

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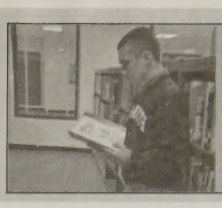
OPINION



Student accepted into Dartmouth, 4

PHOTO BY WILLIAM NGO

Hipsters unable to achieve originality despite quest to be labeled as different

By Kylie Poling
Opinion Editor

Hipsters' worst nightmare has come true: they've been caught in the mainstream. If you look around the halls of Homestead, chances are you'll see someone who you can identify as a hipster. Ironically enough, hipsters aren't categorically 'hip,' rather they embrace the ideas of generations past. They read ee cummings (yes, his name is all lowercase), they wear those big glasses that they probably don't even need, they listen to Nirvana but probably can't tell you when Kurt Cobain died (April 1994, if you were wondering), and brag about how "they were doing the latest trends first."

A hipster is defined as "a person, especially during the 1950s, characterized by a particularly strong sense of alienation from most established social activities and relationships," according to Dictionary.com. In the essence of the word in its modern connotation, true hipsters do not call themselves hipsters. They will deny themselves as hipsters at all cost because, afterall, if they acknowledge it, they lose their street cred.

The main issue I have found within the hipster community is the air of pretentiousness that surrounds it. "I don't like that band anymore because it's too well-known," or "I styled my hair like that before anyone else," are commonplace grievances that can be heard daily. It's all about anticipating trends--which are really just resurrections of old trends--that drives them. All the hipsters carry iPhones, yet they treasure their vintage record players and typewriters.

Why? Well, no one really knows. Maybe they appreciate modern technology but embrace the ways of old. (Judging by their fashion trends, the 'old' seems to be the norm. Afterall, most of their fashion choices can be identified from the hippie, grunge and punk subcultures that evolved decades ago.)

"Essentially, the hipster movement has taken over our society. It is impossible to outrun or ignore..."

KYLIE POLING

I have found that most of those who call themselves hipsters do so because they want to be different. In actuality, though, by trying to be different, they are all the same. It's quite the paradox, indeed. Hipsters tend to look alike, seeing as they follow most of the same trends.

Benjamin Franklin asserted, "If everyone is thinking alike, then no one is thinking." This is inherently true, as all hipsters are alike in the fact that they try to be different.

With the rise of the trend comes the fact that now anything looks hipster. I cannot wear a flannel without looking like one. I cannot wear my glasses without looking like one. I cannot wear a band tee without looking like one.

Essentially, the hipster movement has taken over our society. It is impossible to outrun or ignore, yet everyone who can be identified as a hipster claims that they are fighting against the mainstream.

So I say that the term "hipster" should die. If you want to be different, then be different in your own way. Be different however you interpret the term. If dressing and acting like a hipster is something that speaks to you on a spiritual level, then by all means, go ahead and be a hipster. Just know that there are other, more original options available.

No one should try to define him or herself by any label. Labels are useless. They limit creativity and stifle growth. Do what you want to do, not what all the other hipsters tell you to do. Afterall, it's you who has to look back in twenty, thirty, fifty years and say, "Wow. Did I really dress like that?"

It's okay to be mainstream, as long as you're true to who you are. As trite as it sounds, it's the truth. Let being a hipster fade into a dark abyss and embrace originality in the form of actually being unique.

Jesting remark shocks viewers

Principal's attempt to humor audience crosses line of professionalism

On Friday, Dec. 20, Park Ginder, principal, sent students home for winter break in an uproar over a comment said during the weekly video announcements. When asked, along with a plethora of other students and faculty members, what his plans were for winter break, Ginder responded, "Sleeping in, reading books, and beating (his) children." There are countless responses with which Ginder could have used to reply to the question that would have been predictable, acceptable and appropriate. This response, however, was not any of the above.

The Ed Board

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It's unfortunate to think that a principal's words could justly offend hundreds of the students he oversees. The video announcements have notoriously been monitored in the past so as to ensure no inappropriate content is displayed in front of the entire student body. Not one of the students interviewed answered the question with an answer that could be deemed inappropriate; who would have thought the principal would be the tasteless one amongst a group of teenagers?

Although it is obvious Ginder was simply trying to crack a joke, child abuse is no laughing matter. According to the organization childhelp.org, 17.6% of all children experience some type of physical abuse. With a study body of over 2,000, that means over 300 students, statistically speaking, have experienced physical abuse. Child abuse is not funny to them, so it shouldn't be funny to the rest of the school's population either. The key to successful speaking is knowing one's audience. There may be a time and a place in which an audience will not take offense to such comments on child abuse, but a school of over 2,000 students coming from all different situations and walks of life does not happen to be one of those places. It's a certain type of offensive humor that some find funny, but in a public school it will be regarded as nothing other than just that: offensive. In retrospect, it doesn't even matter if some students thought his comment was funny, because if even one student was affected (and based on the outpour of negativity on social media surrounding the event there was more than one student), then Ginder was wrong for saying it.

The whole situation, though deemed comical to some, was sad. It's sad that some students have to worry as victims of abuse. It's even sadder the principal didn't consider them before he spoke on the video announcements. Ultimately, whether or not Ginder or others found his recent words acceptable, there should be an apology. Ginder made a mistake, something that all people, students, teachers and administrators alike, will do. From this point forward, the issue is no longer what Ginder said on the video announcements, but rather how he handles the criticism and whether or not he recognizes the inappropriate quality of his words.

As students, particularly as students of Homestead, we are expected to display a certain amount of respect to students and faculty alike. If the leader of our school doesn't display the same kind of respect expected from the rest of us, then the foundation of values built will quickly crumble. Ginder made a mistake; it's time for him to fix it.

{The Bottom Line} *The questionable remark made by principal Park Ginder raises questions among the students and signals a need for an apology.*

CARTOON BY EMILY SPATT

Cafeteria selections unbalanced

Small array of obligatory healthy options fail to appeal to buyers

By Katie Maher
Writer

Along with striding to meet the state guidelines for education and assuring the best learning experience possible, the school also has to meet the USDA dietary guidelines in the lunchroom in order meet the nutrition and alimental needs of the students. Although the USDA guidelines have been met, students still struggle to eat a balanced school lunch.

There are six different lines available for students with a variety of foods every day; a sub line, an Italian food line, a Mexican food bar, an American food line, an international line and a "grab and go" line.

Despite such a widespread variety of food, the question of whether all of these options are really "healthy" foods remains. Sure, there are some fruit cups available in the grab 'n' go, but there is a higher assortment of chips and other junk food available at the checkout than foods with more nutritional value.

For example, take a look at the weekly main course meal plan at the Italian bar. Every day, Monday through Friday, pizza and cheese-stuffed bread sticks serve as the main dish. Throw a bag of chips and cookies in with the stuffed crust pizza and breadstick like many students do, and lunch becomes a tray filled with fat, sugar and carbohydrates. Of course this does not apply to every student by any means; there are still quite a few that will swap the cookies for an apple. But the number of students that make healthy decisions would likely increase if more nutritious options were available.

One step that can be put in place to encourage healthier choices might be to have nutritional information for lunch menu options available either posted in the cafeteria, or even in the student handbook. If students were aware of what they were eating, they would likely try to eat in ways that are more beneficial to their health. In recent years, to meet the USDA standards, the cafeteria has cut back on health nuisances (i.e. the infamous school ranch dressing). Instead of cutting back, the lunchroom should also try to add even more of the healthier food options. If there were a wider variety of vegetables available in the line, then it will become easier for students to make healthy decisions.

Of course these suggestions are not meant to try to lead students into becoming obsessive calorie-counting health nuts; it is ok to have the pizza and cookies and chips every once and awhile.

Eating unhealthily on a daily basis is not only just bad for a student's health, but the combination will start to taste tiresome. The cafeteria can take measures to encourage healthier eating, but the decision to eat healthier really comes down to the choices of the student.

'Wolf of Wall Street' stuns audience

Illegal habits depicted satirically expose valueless lifestyles of those in spotlight

By Colby Shoup
Writer

Although beloved filmmaking duo of Martin Scorsese and Leonardo Dicaprio's latest project, "The Wolf of Wall Street," has received rave reviews and Oscar nominations, the film is extremely controversial, polarizing movie goers and creating tension.

The film chronicles the true story of con artist Jordan Belfort (played by Dicaprio) who made it big on Wall Street through unethical and often illegal methods. It is said by many to glorify the highly illegal lifestyle of its protagonist, which involved constant drug and alcohol abuse, prostitution and, most importantly, fraud.

There are two reasons that the irrational group of protesters against 'Wolf of Wall Street' are in the wrong. First, although the film is based on a true story, most of the debauchery and illegal activities in the film are portrayed in a satirical manner, meant to comment on how disgusting American aristocratic culture is. The public feels as though it's glorifying the horrible things the protagonist does; however, what it is trying to say is to the people of the aristocratic culture of America these horrible things are commonplace.

The second thing the film's detractors need to keep in mind is that the film is told from a point of view of someone who has no quarrel with the illegal activities depicted in the movie, from the perspective of Jordan Belfort himself.

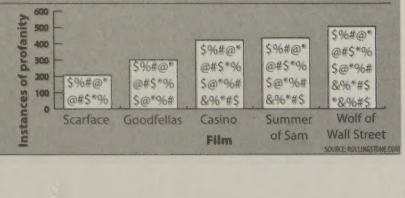
Although, admittedly, the film does spend most of its whopping three hour run time focusing on Belfort's lavish and highly illegal lifestyle, it's important for the misguided people protesting the film to remember it is told from Belfort's point of view, who loved living his life in the disgusting manner he did. So, in a way it has to glorify the lifestyle in order to be realistic and true to the source material.

The story is told by a twisted individual who has a foggy view of right and wrong, but this doesn't mean that the filmmakers share or condone this point of view. Scorsese and Dicaprio set out to make the life story of a man turned into a monster by greed, and as storytellers it is only their job to present the story and the characters. It is our job, as the audience, to make judgments. When asked about the controversy sparked by the film, its director Martin Scorsese gave a poignant response which completely shut down the arguments opposing the movie.

"I didn't want to stand back and say, 'This is bad behavior,'" Scorsese said," It's not for us to say; it's for us to present. And, obviously, it's bad behavior. Obviously, the values are twisted and turned upside down... If it raises the ire of some people, (then it) might be a good thing because it makes you think about it."

NOT SO RARE TO SWEAR

In comparison to other movies with restricted ratings, *The Wolf of Wall Street* breaks the record for the largest amount of explicit language, containing 506 of one cuss word.



twitter take

The Spartana attempts to capture the most impulsive responses on Twitter.

Question: "What should @CurtisSmithNC call off next?"

@dontKATE_on_me - Kate Graney (10) ▶ "The next generation."

@colonelmyers - Nick Myers (11) ▶ "The obvious choice is Monday."

@KelseyHerber - Kelsey Herber (9) ▶ "Still school."

@HeavensTo_Betsy- Betsy Badders (12) ▶ "My upcoming freshman 15."

@CurtisSmithNC- Curtis Smith ▶ "We'll stick with school...which could happen again this week."

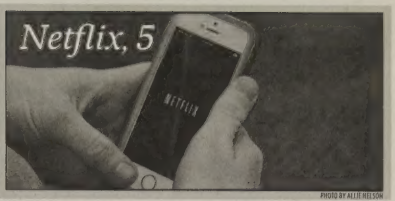


PHOTO BY ALLIE NELSON

Standards motivate students

Acceptance letters offer scholars new futures as college approaches

By William Ngo
Executive Editor

Harvard hit a record-low 5.8% acceptance rate last year while Yale stretched to its highest admittance rate to date, 6.72%, according to Time. The Ivy League, composed of eight prestigious colleges, is nationally recognized and commended for its academic excellence and high selectivity.

Aspiring Ivy League students follow their dreams year after year, as low as those daunting statistics may be; teenagers submit applications for a 90% rejection rate, according to Cappex.

Dartmouth welcomed Bailey Miller (12) as he plans to major either in mathematics or computer science. This dream come true was four years in the making. During eighth grade, Miller visited colleges alongside his older brother. Miller had set his eyes on Dartmouth ever since that trip.

He found himself attracted to the focus towards undergraduate education and strong academics of such a selective college.

"I think just having a goal, whether it's any selective college or semi-personal goal, helps to drive work ethic in students," Miller said. "It doesn't matter how high that goal is, as long as it's something that challenges you."

Though his personal life may get put on hold often, he enjoys his studies and does not mind making time to understand material.

With the high school known for quality education, students strive to excel, maintain solid GPAs and attain coveted titles including valedictorian.

"I try not to get really involved in the competitiveness between students because I think you can definitely be more effective and learn more and have a better environment if everybody is working together," Miller said.

On the other hand, Marielle Cabe (12) senses no competition among her friends but recognizes the pressures school can put on her.

"Sometimes I just take a step back and reevaluate," Cabe said. "Sometimes it means not putting 110 percent in something or another, but I think it's equally important to eat some chocolate, curl up with a movie, book or TV show and have a mental health day."

Cabe sent out applications to 11 schools but specifically put her hopes on one: Harvard. She, searching for diversity and specialty, will hear back with a final decision later in the year. She plans to study medicine, ideally in the oncology or hematology field.

Ivy League schools have received generally positive reception among students at school.

"I have not heard anything bad about Ivy league schools," Allie Gallmeyer (11) said. "College is good for anyone to go to no matter what kind it is."

Although the Ivy League offers incomparable opportunities, other chances can be found throughout the entire nation, allowing every student to ultimately shape his own future.

"Just because a school is an Ivy League school doesn't necessarily guarantee that you're going to do well after college," Miller said. "It's the man that makes the school more than the school makes the man."

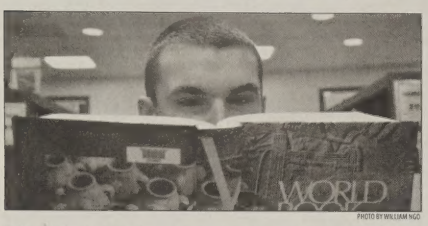
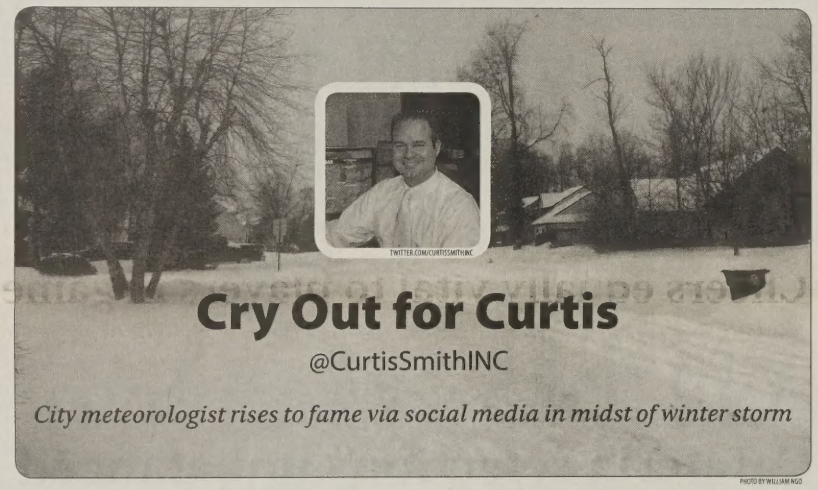


PHOTO BY WILLIAM NGO

Bailey Miller (12) studies in the library. He applied to Dartmouth College, one of eight Ivy league schools in the nation.



TWITTER.COM/CURTISSMITHINC

PHOTO BY WILLIAM NGO

Cry Out for Curtis

@CurtisSmithINC

City meteorologist rises to fame via social media in midst of winter storm

Snow fills the road of neighborhoods and leads to another cancellation day. Curtis interacts with students through Twitter by casting predictions.

By Tessa Virgilio
Writer

Frosted windshield, record-breaking low temperatures and slick roads this month extended winter break by an entire week.

Many would believe the decision of a delay or cancellation, due to extreme weather, lies in the hands of the authorities, but eager students took to Twitter to help with the matter of extending the days off.

"At this rate, we're never getting out of school," Carl Fischer (11) said.

For students in the Fort Wayne area, contacting a local weatherman via social networking was the way to achieve more time off.

"I honestly don't think that students, in this current generation, pay that close attention to the news and the weather," Amy Barnes, vocational business teacher, said. "To know that they're (...) showing interest in it is kind of a cool thing."

Curtis Smith, chief meteorologist for Fort Wayne news station 21Alive, began receiving an immense amount of buzz on Twitter once more teens started viewing his weather broadcasts looking for cancellations.

"I was getting more and more questions about whether school would be delayed or canceled from all kinds of people, and it was really getting to be too much to answer everybody individually anymore, which I try to do," Smith said.

Social media became involved when Smith brought Twitter into the picture, attempting to kick start the unofficially trending hashtag, "call it off."

"I was trying to find a way to get the information out in a more streamlined way," Smith said. "Somebody suggested (the hashtag 'call it off') and I thought that was a pretty good (hash tag), so I started putting it out there and it just erupted."

Students began inserting the hashtag into tweets with questions regarding his influence over delays and cancellations.

"There were times in that stretch and sense when I (had) tweeted out that I (thought) school should be canceled because the cold (had) been, or (would) be, dangerous," Smith said. "Whenever I suggest a day or cancellation possibility, it seems to obviously strike a chord with most high school students."

Throughout the week of Jan 6-10, Twitter-savvy students obsessed over Smith's next prediction. Within a week, Smith gained over 1,500 followers.

Hashtags and Twitter popularity were not the only elements of the Curtis craze. T-shirts reading "#Callitoff" were advertised on his Twitter page. It all started with a few dedicated weather bugs.

"It was that very first Thursday night when my face started showing up on pictures of Jesus and Barack Obama and the hundred dollar bill and Mount Rushmore and Miley Cyrus and everyone under the sun," Smith said. "That was probably the most shocking thing – when my face was being photoshopped onto virtually any image that anyone could find."

Smith, voted by the Journal-Gazette as the Best Local Weather Forecaster, began working with 21Alive as the chief meteorologist in 1995 and still holds the position today.

He was the first to earn the prestigious American Meteorological Society Seal of Approval in 2002.

"I like helping people with weather information, so even though this has been a quirky and goofy way for it to happen, it's still good," Smith said.

Disney gains large and obsessive fan groups

Fairy tales portray an unrealistic yet lighthearted view on romance

By Jessica Tebben
Life Editor

After the release of Disney's newest animation "Frozen" hit theaters, fans and critics compared it endlessly to its predecessors, causing fans to rediscover old passions for fairy tales.

Since 1937 when "Snow White", Disney's first full-length animated film, became the highest grossing film of all time, according to waltdisneystudios.com, children dreaming of wishes and fairy tales have grown up to be Disney fanatics. Whether their enjoyment of the movies stems from the music or the magic, most fans agree that there are more to Disney movies than what most think.

"I watched all (of the Disney movies) when I was a kid," Shelby Payne (9) said. "They're just so much fun."

Although the happy endings make the idea of a Disney fairy tale desirable to fans, the unrealistic portrayals of love and enchantment are what make the movies special. Disney movie enthusiasts agree they enjoy watching the unattainable clichés about love at first sight and a true love's kiss.

"None of (the Disney movies) are relatable," Kerry Hawken (11) said. "That's why people like them so much."

However, as Walt Disney's animation studios churn out hit movie after hit movie, admirers seem to be growing in power and number. The fans may become obsessive, but there are some incentives to enjoying Disney movies as much as they do, including the ability to watch Disney movies repeatedly and never getting tired of watching.

"I'd say some (Disney fans) are (a bit extreme) just because they marathon movies weekend upon weekend and they just keep doing it," Nick Fendt (10) said. "It doesn't get old to them."

The main fan base for Disney movies is compromised of girls, who are more prone to falling in love with characters, plots and the overall aesthetics of Disney films.

"I think (girls) like the look of (the movies) and the plot is appealing and it always turns out good in the end," Fendt said.

Although many girls are excited purely by the fairy tales, some look at the movies as a way to set standards in life.

"All girls want to have a guy that treats them like a princess," Hawken said.

Characters and music also play a large part in the magic of Disney movies, and for some, these aspects make or break the entire movie.

"I know a lot of the princesses all have a different personality," Payne said. "Mulan was really determined to fight for her house and everything. So I think the personality of the main character (is important)."

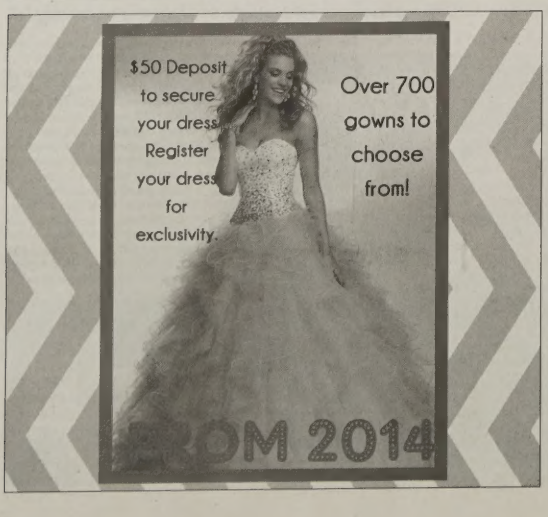
Although many hardcore Disney fans are older, the movies created at Disney animation studios entertain people of all ages.

"Some (Disney movies) that I've watched have humor for adults, and they all apply to kids," Payne said. "You just never grow old from them."

> "All girls want to have a guy that treats them like a princess."
>
> **KERRY HAWKEN (11)**
> *Disney Supporter*

No matter the age of the audience, Disney movies are timeless movies that will be enjoyed for generations to come. Disney movies have had a large amount of dedicated fans, and most everyone can find a movie from Disney studios that they enjoy watching.

"My favorite part about Disney movies is that they all have happy endings," Hawken said.



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Snow days call for improvisation and creativity

Browsing through social networking sites after waking up at three in the afternoon on our four extra days of break, I noticed many students complaining of boredom and hoping for school to continue just as it had before our three week winter sabbatical. First of all, going back to school does not make you any less bored; it just causes an educational and social high for about half a day or until you realize that you have too much homework, but you also want to sleep for three hours straight.

Deviating from the negative aspects of coming back to school after going to bed when you usually wake up and waking up at around the same time that school usually gets out, there are convenient ways of wiping away all traces of boredom without becoming stressed. Before you tweet about how totally NOT cool the snow day is because "OMG I'm so bored!", remember that school does not cure boredom.

JESS SAYIN'

BY JESSICA TEBBEN
Life Editor

Perhaps the best boredom-buster on snow days is sleep. Of course, you're going to want to sleep in on the snow day, but here's a fun challenge to think about after just waking up to a fresh blanket of blinding snow: turn over and fall back to sleep.

If you're not a sleeper or you feel the need to be productive on snow days, I would suggest listening to music so loudly that your parents threaten to ground you until you turn it down. Along with the idea of music, a snow day is the perfect time to practice the song you want to sing whenever you try out for American Idol even though you know you really shouldn't be singing at all. Just sing very loudly and very obnoxiously and maybe dance. Ten times out of ten, loud music makes any boring situation a little bit more bearable, at least until you return to the glamour of high school life.

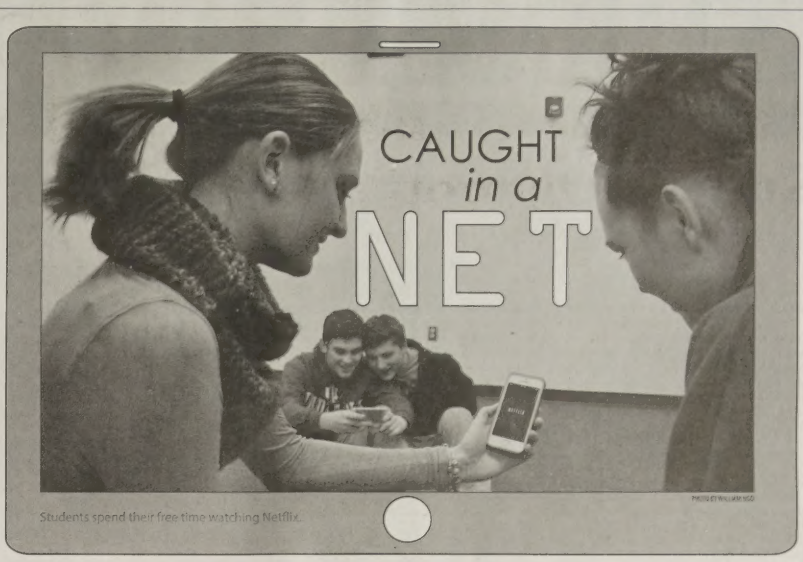
If you're a little insane and not into music, another effective way to kill time is by watching television. Find a TV show that looks appealing and then watch the whole first season in a day. It has been done before (I know from personal experience) and can be done again.

A whole-day venture might seem a bit tedious, so a great way to stomp out monotony is to make a check list of things you want to do and then do all of them at once. Some things you might want to put on your to-do list include writing a poem, eating a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, getting into a fist fight with your brother or petting your dog. Then you'll have a bunch of pointless things done before you have to return to school and not be able to do anything again until the next time you have a delay since all your "free" time will be taken up by homework and extracurricular activities.

My favorite way to pass time is by playing the Sims. Spend the whole day making Sims and then making their house and starting the process over again (since we all know that's the best part of the whole game). Wasting this kind of time is simple. At four in the morning, you'll realize you've been playing for thirteen hours straight and you'll regret wishing for that snow day.

Since it probably snowed about eight inches – hence the term "snow day" – it's inevitable that you're going to have the desire to run outside and destroy the perfection of the glittering blanket on the ground. The most obvious way to bust boredom on a snow day is to play in the snow. Whether you make a clone of Olaf from Disney's new movie, "Frozen", or you throw the snow hard enough at your brother to bruise him in the leg, rolling around in the snow is great for all ages on a snow day. But thank goodness you get to wake up the next morning and go back to school in the cold and snow, right? As long as you're not so darn bored anymore!

I guess my point is enjoy the snow days when we have them because, contrary to our recent snow day rendezvous, we don't have them often.



Students spend their free time watching Netflix.

Popular movie and television vault infamous for cause of binge watching

BY MALLORY MCCAULEY
Online Editor

In the past year, the Netflix craze has risen up and taken over many high school students' lives. Netflix allows its users to watch their favorite television series or movies on the spot with an eight dollar monthly fee. It can be accessed by computer, Wii, Xbox, PS3 and numerous other devices.

Rather than updating content as each single episode airs, Netflix waits until a show's season has ended and then adds the entire season to its library. Netflix also has older seasons, such as Law and Order's seasons which date back to 1990.

"Netflix is appealing because you have all the TV shows and movies right on your TV, and you don't have to worry about renting them for money or buying them if you don't have them," Maddie Doerffler (10) said.

> "I binge watch all the time because there are multiple season you can watch back to back, which is addicting and more efficient than going out and buying them individually."
>
> **BROOKE PERRY (10)**
> *Netflix Enthusiast*

Netflix has hundreds of different movies and TV series which appeal to all ages and genders, from children shows like "Dora the Explorer", to chick-flicks such as "Like Crazy" or even action movies like "James Bond."

"I like that Netflix has both TV shows and movies because they have whatever you could be in the mood for," Fahad Hasnain (11) said.

A new trend of "binge watching" TV series on Netflix has taken over teens' snow days spent stranded at home, or even when they could be doing something more productive such as schoolwork. Binge watching a show is simply sitting down and watching episode after episode without break. The habit is made easy on Netflix because rather than having to purchase individual episodes, the viewer has multiple seasons right on hand.

"I binge watch all the time because there are multiple seasons you can watch back to back, which is addicting and more efficient than going out and buying them individually," Brooke Perry (10) said.

Netflix conveniently organizes its content by genre so that shows and interests are easy to explore. Netflix gives its users an additional way to see the extent of its content by giving viewers "suggestions" by analyzing their recently watched shows or movies. This, in turn, gives the viewer an idea on other shows or movies Netflix has which they might enjoy.

In comparison to other video-streaming websites, Netflix seems to be the most popular among students due to its unique and flexible features.

"I would choose Netflix over other programs because I don't know much about the others like Amazon, but I know with Netflix you get everything every month for eight dollars, and with Amazon, you have to pay for a movie every time," Doerffler said.

Of all aspects of the Netflix craze, one thing is undeniable; students are in love with Netflix and seem to be flooding their free time with episode after episode of shows all streamed through Netflix.

Cheers equally vital to players in game

Student section perfects and increases choreography, participation grows

BY AWBREI VACHON
Writer

It is no secret the basketball team is composed of talented players who racked up an 11-3 record so far this season, but what some people might not consider is how important the student section really is to the team's success.

The student section's goal is to keep the players amped up and motivated during the game, but it also has a couple special tricks up its sleeve on top of it all.

"We want to keep our student section positive, and we want to keep (the student section) in the game, because if they aren't all in the game then and it's kind of boring for a lot of people," Alex Weaver (12), student section leader, said.

Weaver and the other student section leader, Mason Keebler (12), have come up with specific reactions to certain things the players accomplish during the games – a set of tactics to make things interesting for both the players and the fans.

"(When the student section gets crazy) it excites (us) and (gives us) a bunch of energy and helps the team go," Ryan Cotter (12) said. "(Like at) the beginning when they chant the 'I believe' thing. That always gets everyone really excited before the game."

In addition, the student section makes a big deal about three-pointers, free throws and dunks, which really hypes up the atmosphere in the gym.

"Whenever someone makes a (three-pointer) we make sure to let everyone know, so we throw a three up in the air, and for free throws if it's an 'and one' we do the Hunger Games symbol because it's three points and you're supposed to be quiet during free throws so it kind of works out that way," Weaver said.

The most interesting is probably when the student section reacts to dunking.

During a home game, Caleb "Biggie" Swanigan had a put-back slam dunk, and Weaver and Keebler sat back on the bleachers in amazement. They decided it would be incredible if every time a player had a slam dunk, the whole student section would all fall back, thus reenacting a much bigger version of Weaver and Keebler's initial reaction.

"The first time we (all fell backwards), Biggie had a wide open layup (but) he decided to dunk instead, so when we all fell back we could see him go over to the student section and go celebrate," Weaver said.

For students not in on the plan, the reaction was surprising to them.

"It's awesome to watch everyone's reaction, and it kind of catches you off guard, but it's really cool to see everyone do it together," Gabby Hollman (11) said.

At the end of the night, what truly matters is not whether or not the team actually comes out on top, but how supportive the student section is of its peers.

"It unites the student body together; it's something that we all enjoy," Hollman said. "We all come to the games for one reason, and that's to support our team."

PHOTO BY REAGAN MIKESELL

Chants fill the home court as students dress up for a Halloween costume theme night. Other themes were camo, black-out and white-out.

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PHOTO BY REAGAN MIKESELL

Cancellations impede athletic schedules

Polar vortex compels teams to rearrange practice times, students 'came back fatigued'

By Adam Swiatkowski
Writer

As school cancellations have been plentiful so far this school year, many students spend their time off relaxing or spending time with friends. Teenagers avoid yet another day of education and attempt finishing late homework assignments.

However, for those in a winter sport or beginning conditioning for sports in the spring, more school cancellations and called-off practices could mean a shortened or unprepared-for season.

Winter sports may be most affected, as both practices and games were called off due to four cancellations during what was scheduled to be the first week back from winter break, along with five later cancellations.

With so much snow in such a short amount of time, there was no way for after-school activities later in the day to be continued.

"In all, we missed three days of practice in that first week and had no way to go to any other pools (to train)," Mark Hammes (10), swimmer, said. "It was not good to have such a long break; we came back fatigued and couldn't train at our regular pace."

To make matters worse, ongoing snowstorms continue to pose a threat to the swim teams' training schedules, only a few weeks before sectionals and the state meet. More and more setbacks increase the pressure each swimmer has before defining and important meets.

"(The cancellations) are definitely coming at a bad time, and we're losing momentum before the most important part (of the season)," Hammes said. "More cancellations will undeniably impact our postseason (performance) negatively, and the team hopes that we will be able to put in a strong showing at state."

Along with swimming, basketball teams also cannot practice if school is cancelled, as both of the school gyms become unavailable.

"(The girls basketball team) definitely tries its best to get into the gym even on cancelled days," Savannah Buck (10) said. "Whether it is a workout or just getting some shots up, (we do) a great job of taking advantages on our days off."

Spring sport athletes, unlike their winter counterparts, are not as severely affected by cancellations, though there is little to see as a benefit.

Conditioning for long distance track runners, for instance, does not require school grounds to train.

"So far, six practices have been cancelled, and so the (long distance runners) have to run on our own or try to get a group together at the gym," Ben Dvorak (11) said. "Pre-season for (us) mostly consists of building up mileage, but missing out on these runs for a few days can set (us) back in the long run."

PHOTO BY WILLIAM NGO

Justin Jones (12) and Mason Volz (10) sprint down the hallway in a speedy head to head dash. In this practice, the losing racer must perform a set of pushups. The entire track team paired up to practice.

Long distance track runners and other spring sport athletes are only focusing on conditioning at the moment.

The girls basketball team will feel the full impact of a few missed practices immediately, especially before upcoming games.

"After missed practices, it takes the team a little bit to get back in the groove, and (it takes time) to get mentally prepared before each game," Buck said. "But our coach does a great job in the times we do practice (the day) before a game and after a few cancellations. (He) helps us get ready to perform."

Despite this past year's snow storm, sports teams continue to aim and strive for high goals.

SENSE THE DEFENSE

Intramurals offers leisure play, exercise without time commitment

By Austen Cummings
Writer

With the beginning of the second semester in full swing, intramural basketball, an event students anticipate all year, is underway.

Students gather their friends and have the opportunity to choose a creative team name and play against their fellow participants, and it is only 35 dollars per player.

"Our team name is 'Team SWAT,'" Nate Laws (11) said. "I honestly have no idea why it is."

The choice of a team name essentially kick starts the entire experience, allowing players a chance to express their personalities and talents. It also brings a lighted hearted aspect to the tournament which at times can be rather competitive.

PHOTOS BY REAGAN MIKESELL

"We are 'Oreo Cookies,'" Isaiah Anderson (10) said, "We picked this because Oreo cookies are better than any other cookie, and our team is better than everyone else's."

Not only is coming up with a clever name what intramurals is all about, but it also pertains to playing against other students and trying to win. Typically, each team contains a group of friends, so the event allows for students of all ages to get involved in extracurricular activities and gain school spirit.

"I think we will do pretty well because we can score, and our defense is good," Laws said.

Just as the school's basketball team has a dynamic group of members, each of whom contribute his own strengths, intramural players hold varying skills that are essential to the flow of the tournament.

"I think we will do great," Anderson said, "our whole team looks good and we are really confident."

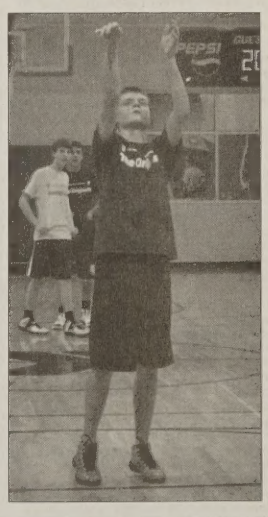
Behind all of the crazy names, confident athletes and competitive teams, there is the man who runs it all, Matt Lindelien. Intramural basketball at Homestead was started in 2004 by Lance Hershberger, who was the Athletic Director at the Jorgensen YMCA, where the events take place, but was taken over by Lindelien.

"I believe (Hershberger) wanted to give high school kids the opportunity for a competitive non-school sport," Lindelien said.

The purpose of intramurals is to bring about a sense of school pride, while teaming up with peers who have similar interests. Also, it reaches out to those who are passionate about basketball who were unable to play on the school's team this season.

"My favorite part about Intramurals is that you do not have to be a superstar athlete to play in them," Lindelien said. "We have two skill divisions to make games as closely competitive as possible. There is division A for the more experienced or upperclassmen, and division B for the less experienced or (underclassmen). Anybody that who wants to exercise and compete has that opportunity here."

Under Lindelien's direction, the program has flourished over the years, thus becoming one of the most popular, anticipated activities of the entire school year. Nevertheless, whether a participant is seven feet tall or five feet tall, competitive or in it for fun, intramural basketball at the YMCA provides an opportunity for everyone.



Left: Jake Muha (10) blocks a shot from opposing team member Austin Krider (10) during an intramural basketball game that took place at the Jorgensen YMCA. Right: Eric Martin (10) shoots a basket during an intramurals game.

Statewide favorite team fails to repeat successful season

Despite being ranked number one in the nation last year, college players fall to the inexperience of freshmen

By Adam Swiatkowski
Writer

After 2 years of knocking off high-ranked teams and establishing themselves as contenders in the NCAA Tournament, the Indiana University (IU) basketball team's Cinderella-esque story has essentially ended in this year's season, leaving fans wondering what the future will hold for the school's beloved tradition of basketball.

With several disappointing losses arising from the graduation of several seniors and other players' departures to the NBA, the recruiting class has been unable to keep recent success going in 2013 and 2014.

With a 14-8 overall record and only having won 4 of nine games in the Big 10 conference, issues are approaching and college basketball followers wonder whether IU's season can be salvaged.

"It's frustrating to see IU have such an up and down season (after) losing several key players from last season," Kate Graney (10) said. "Once the freshmen start improving and get into the swing of college basketball, the team will (begin) getting good results."

With team leaders Victor Oladipo and Cody Zeller parting ways with IU to be drafted into the NBA after the 2013 NCAA Tournament, IU fans such as Graney and Eric Martin (10) are discouraged of any turnaround for the current season.

> "It's frustrating to see IU have such an up and down season (after) losing several key players from season."
>
> **KATE GRANEY (10)**
> *IU Basketball Fan*

"From all of the hype last year and being (ranked) number one in the nation, this season is a bit disappointing as the team is so young, and we have so much talent. It will be hard to make the (NCAA) Tournament," Martin said. "(IU has) two of the best shooters in the nation coming in as freshmen next year and (the team) will be able to go right into rotation. So, next season (the team) could make it into the top 10 (ranking of teams)."

The next recruiting class will be important for IU, as shooting has consistently been a major problem for all of the team's starters, as well as turnovers.

Compounded with other individual issues that are specific to each player, fans and basketball pundits alike have been treated to a mediocre showing from the Hoosiers this season.

Having lost games that should have been easily won, the IU team will emphasize improvement for next year.

"Since IU lost four 1000 point scorers from last year, I expected a little inconsistency since (the team) is so young," Nick Byall, history teacher, said. "Things change every year with (players) getting older and more experience, so having a full summer (in 2014) to work out with the team will help this year's large freshman class."

Already poised to overcome this unexceptional season, IU head coach Tom Crean has signed a few players to improve on key problems within the team.

Byall, a former manager of the IU basketball team in his college years, expects that the coming seasons will allow for the team to return to success.

"(IU) needs to bring in players to fill roles, since the team does not have any consistent shooters this year," Byall said. "(Crean) has already recruited players who are solid shooters, players who were badly needed this season. With more recruiting, there is definitely potential for the future"

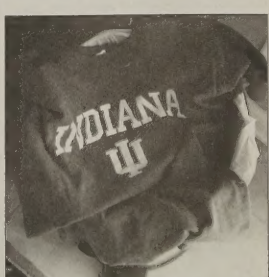


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY REAGAN MIKESELL

An IU shirt is thrown into the trash can in response to a disappointing basketball season.

Debate over homosexuality taints true purpose of Olympic games

I could speak about what it takes to be an athlete until I'm blue in the face; it's something that I've always been very persistent about. Whether it's a female or a male, a dancer or a football player, it takes strength, dignity and passion to play a sport. None of these traits are surfaced, and not often do outsiders spectate over an athlete's family, social life or other personal tendencies. It's simply about the game they play, how well they play it and the athletic accomplishments they have made.

A wildly controversial aspect of athleticism has been causing uproar for as long as I can remember, but with the recent talk in the news, I deliberated speaking of such a sensitive topic: homosexuality in the sports world.

HAIDEN'S HAVEN

HAIDEN STEINGASS
Sports Editor

I stumbled upon an article online regarding the Sochi Winter Olympics and the controversy surrounding Russia's newest anti-gay law. As of last year, it is found unlawful to represent any "non-traditional" forms of affection in public which serves a purpose of sheltering children and promoting customary views. With the Olympics being in the heart of this dispute, many countries have contemplated how to protect their athletes during the winter games. Vladimir Putin, President of Russia, has released a statement and held interviews to incorporate and explain how the anti-gay law should not affect any participants.

However, the tension concerning this topic has swarmed the media recently, and the United States has chosen to speak out. Our country plans to send four gay athletes to Russia with hopes of displaying the updated pro-gay laws. According to an online source from ABC News, Putin plans to meet with the athletes at the time of the Olympic Games.

Billie Jean King is one of the four former Olympic stars who will be travelling to Russia for the occasion, as well as one of the most eminent. Along with every other Olympic athlete, she accomplished such unbelievable goals and dreams. Now, at seventy years old, she has continued to speak out and advocate for gay rights, even if that means travelling to a country known for disagreeing with what she is most passionate about.

In correspondence with my open-minded nature, I can understand the purpose for the United States' loud endorsement. Yet, I am hesitant to believe the country's significant political changes should be demonstrated so openly, especially in a country with completely contrasting values.

> "In a way, I was angered by the judgment and involvement of the controversy of gay rights in the Olympics... I do not fully understand the reason why it should be a variable in an athlete's career."
>
> **HAIDEN STEINGASS**

This dispute interested me, so I continued to research the topic in articles and forums. There were some hateful words and some supportive ones. The thing that grasped my attention with two fists was that people were arguing over homosexuality in its entirety.

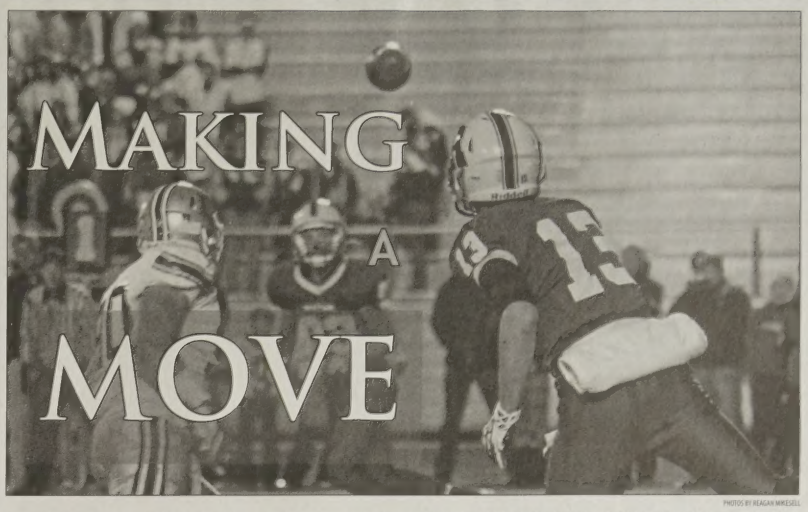
They were not referring to how it affects the game or the athletes' abilities to dominate on the field. Despite any contrasting opinions, I believe no race, gender or sexual orientation has influence over the way an athlete should be perceived.

In a way, I was angered by the judgment and involvement of the controversy of gay rights in the Olympics. This is not due to any personal biases; rather, I do not fully understand the reason why it should be a variable in an athlete's career. The incomprehensible amounts of time and energy the athletes have poured into their sport for four years was not fueled by their personal preferences, nor should their once in a life time opportunity at the winter games be impacted by them.

Beyond my own conception, the Olympics must be the single most unforgettable experience for a participant. The time is rolling around for the past four years of undying work to be paid off and for fans all over the globe to watch it all unravel.

Yet, it saddens me that the media is stamping the event as "the anti-gay Olympics." I believe the original intent and energy of this exciting period is being overshadowed by the uproar of publicity. The enormous attempt for peace and clarity in the situation is seemingly making such a loud statement. One that never needed to be made in the first place.

An athlete is strong, and is to be recognized by his or her skills, not personal matters that are irrelevant to their capabilities. It cannot be repeated enough times: it is about the game, the talent the win or lose. Everything else is meaningless fluff.



PHOTOS BY REAGAN MIKESELL

Quarterback Logan Ormsby (11) throws the ball to his teammate during an NHC game. 2013 was the last year the football team played in the NHC.

Football and basketball teams transition to SAC for 2014-15

By Tessa Lutz
Social Media Manager

Spartan athletic teams have chosen to withdraw from the Northeastern Hoosier Conference (NHC) in order to join the Summit Athletic Conference (SAC), along with the Carroll Chargers. Although all sports teams requested to join the conference, the SAC extended invitations only to the football and girls and boys basketball teams. This year is the last year any sport will partake in the NHC. The SAC now consists of Homestead, Carroll, Bishop Dwenger, Bishop Luers, Snider, Concordia Lutheran, North Side, South Side, Wayne and Northrop.

"Out of all the options available, and since we were no longer a part of our other conference, we felt like (the SAC) was the best other option," Chad Zolman, head football coach, said.

Moving to a new conference brings new opportunities and challenges that the teams accepted.

"(Competing against) Snider, Dwenger, Luers, Carroll: that can be four losses right there," Joe Updegrove, athletic director, said. "Northrop has a new coach, and Southside is traditionally competitive, and Concordia is always strong. We definitely bumped up in competition."

Both the Spartans and Chargers will be probationary teams in the SAC for two years and become full members in 2017, so the underclassmen have some changes ahead of them.

"As a team, we will need to work harder in practice to prepare us for the games in both football and basketball," Ben Skowronek (10), basketball and football player, said. "The underclassmen will need to work harder in the weight room and do things on their own for football because the competition level is much higher than in the NHC."

With hopes of ending a season with a first team all-conference honor, the athletes who will participate in the conference in 2015 have a lot for which to strive.

"The underclassmen have it to look forward to," Updegrove said. "Make it your goal to win the conference title."

After this year, teams beyond football and basketball will not fall into any conference at all and are not able to win conference titles but will still compete in state competitions.

"For the next two years, none of these other teams are going to get second and first all-conference (honors); There is no recognition for those sports, which is unfortunate," Updegrove said. "If things go well, (the SAC) will invite the other sports to join the conference."

Entering a new conference and departing from an old one brings other obstacles beyond competition to the table.

"Schedule wise, it is huge. It gives us guaranteed Friday night games," Updegrove said. "There are eight schools (in the NHC), so we had seven games. We will continue playing Carroll, so for most of the other sports, I have to find six games. For tennis, I have to find six more tennis matches. (For) soccer, I have to find six more soccer games, and so on."

Even with all the new prospects that come with change, the Spartan teams have hopeful seasons ahead of them in the SAC.

"I think we will step up to the challenge and do really well in both basketball and football," Skowronek said.

John Lark (11) and Cameron Straub (11) celebrate together following the victory of a successful play.

Students rally behind Manning

Seahawks conquer Broncos 43-8 in Super Bowl, Colts fans disappointed

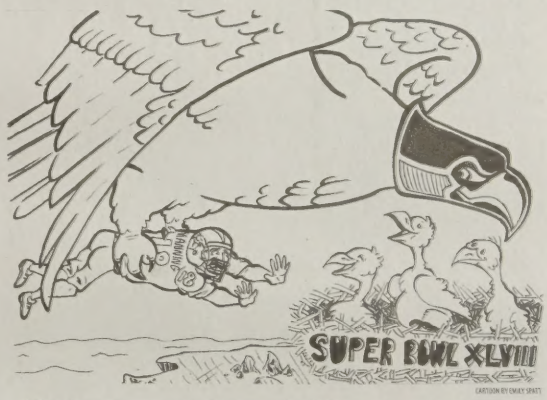
BY ETHAN YDE
Writer

As the majority of Fort Wayne rooted for the Denver Broncos in Super Bowl XLVII, their expectations were crushed by the efforts of the Seattle Seahawks and its 43-8 domination. Denver gained most of its local fans, due to ex-Colt Peyton Manning's dominant presence on the team, and possibly because of the extreme distance between Fort Wayne and the Seattle Seahawks. However, the results shocked and disappointed these fans.

"I (have been a) proud Colts fan since day one, so naturally I (rooted) for the Broncos because of Peyton Manning," Gaby Meissner (10) said. "He is such a renowned player who many love because he carries the team well. You (could see) me sporting my half Colts, half Broncos Manning jersey on game day."

This was Manning's third Super Bowl, and it was his chance to achieve as many titles as his brother, Eli. Although he did not achieve his goals this time around, he has another chance in the future. Because of the love Colts fans had for him, many fans of the Indianapolis team were on the Broncos side for this game. In order to show her devotion for the highly acclaimed quarterback, Meissner's 'half Colts, half Broncos' jersey is split down the middle with a Colts jersey on one side, and a Broncos jersey on the other, both with Manning's number.

"I've always been a fan of Peyton Manning and seeing him having to go through the issue of being with the Colts and switching teams, I just (wanted) to see him win another championship with another team," Jeff Livensparger, freshmen football coach, said. "I think his situation is a bit sour, and seeing Peyton Manning winning another game with the Broncos would (have sweetened) the deal."



CARTOON BY EMILY SPATT

Although most people from Fort Wayne have the view of Colts fans, there were also the occasional fans from Seattle and Denver that were rooting for the team they always have. This group included Chelsie Doster (12) who grew up in Colorado and has understood the game since second grade. She takes part in a traditional party every year, but this year was especially exciting for her.

"I am from Colorado, so naturally my go-to team is the Broncos," Chelsie Doster (12) said. "For this Super Bowl my family got together with some family friends. We always make different appetizers and order pizza, and we watch the game on our projector. Obviously I thought the Broncos (would) win, but even (though they didn't), I still take pride in my team for making it this far."

Nonetheless, it is tough for a person to predict the outcome of such a major game. To have the honor of being the champion of each respective conference reveals that each team had what it took and certainly put all of its effort toward winning the game. Even with the vast amount of Broncos fans, the Seahawks prevailed beyond all expectations.

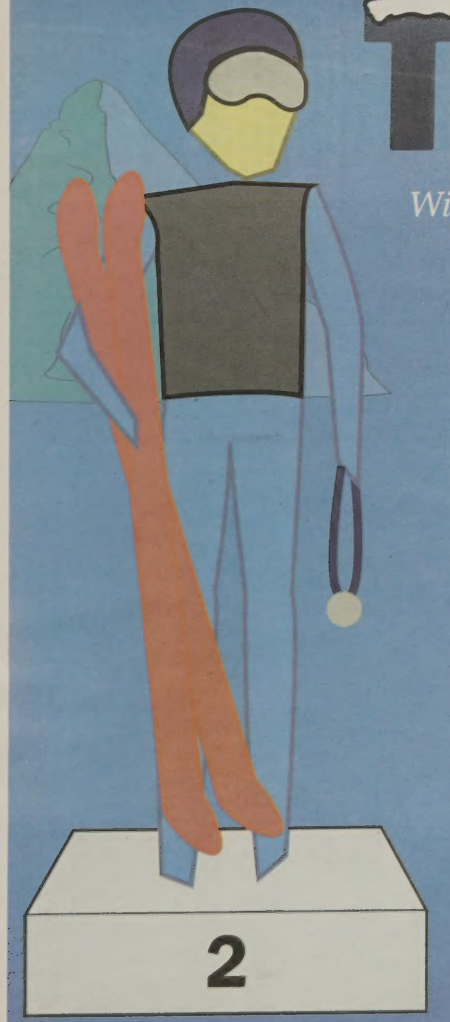
"I (thought) the game (would) end up close because when playing with two great defensive teams, you're (usually) going to have a low scoring game, and even if the Broncos (got) a score ahead, I (thought) that Seattle (would) be able to come back," Livensparger said. "Seattle is a great football team, but I (was) hoping for the Broncos."

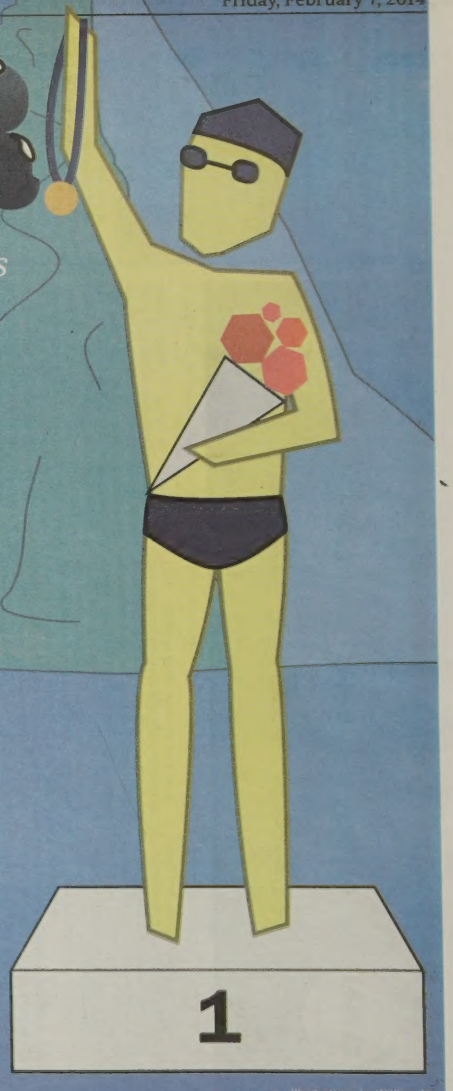
WHAT'S COMING UP?

Girls Basketball	Girls Basketball	Boys Basketball	Boys Basketball	Boys Basketball
Feb. 7	Feb. 8	Feb. 8	Feb. 10	Feb. 13
Home	Home	Home	Home	Home

THE COLD SHOULDER

Winter Olympics lacks viewership and popularity compared to sister event, Summer Olympics





BY ALLIE NELSON
Executive Editor

rriving in Sochi, Russia in February, the Olympic torch will break records. The flaming symbol will have traveled the furthest distance in the history of the season's games: 40,389 miles from Olympia, Greece to the setting of the international event, according to sochi2014.com.

Not only does the trek to Sochi establish its originality from past games but the Russian region itself offers a unique edge to the tradition.

From the subtropical conditions at ground level to the frigid temperatures near the snow-blanketed mountaintops, Sochi boasts a freshness the Winter Olympics desperately needs toward establishing its equality with the Summer Games.

Whether the Winter Olympics is overshadowed by the Super Bowl five days before or are not as intriguing to the public as the Summer Olympics, the viewership of the games performed in arctic conditions falls short to that of the Summer Olympics.

With 185 million watching, the 2010 Winter Games trudged behind the 2012 Summer Games, which was followed by 219.4 million, according to latimes.com.

"The Winter Olympics includes (sports) like hockey and figure skating, which not a lot of people do," Mackenzie Sather (10), former figure skater of nine years, said. "(People) prefer the Summer (Olympics) more because they are familiar with all those sports."

Students typically watch sports familiar to themselves. Since winter sports are not as widely participated in due to the flat seasonal environment, viewership for the Winter Olympics is lower.

Despite its comparatively low popularity, the Winter Olympics provides motivation for students to excel athletically.

For Aiden Elizondo (11), competitive skier, the winter games is most applicable to his rigorous training routine, which he repeats daily throughout the winter months he spends in New York.

Although his schedule is not entirely geared toward Olympic preparation, his involvement is still a possibility.

"I get up and train for three hours in the morning and then take a couple hours of break," Elizondo said. "I do some homework and then go back and train, do a workout and then train for two hours at night."

The Winter Olympics, as well as the athletes involved, serves to remind the rewarding of athletic dedication.

Elizondo's encounters with the participants not only inspire but also represent success in the sport as attainable.

"I've skied with a couple of (Olympic competitors), including Ted Ligety, who won a race yesterday," Elizondo said. "He's in contention for a lot of medals for the Olympics this year. I've skied with Andrew Wiebrecht who won a bronze in (2010) so that really gets me amped up for the Olympics."

Besides their tendency to encourage younger athletes to strive for the triumphs experienced by Olympians, the games are entertaining, especially to those already interested in the sport being played.

> "I think (the low viewership is) kind of ridiculous. I feel like if people just gave it a chance rather than passing on, it would be watched a lot more."
>
> **TYLER SATHER (12)**
> *Hockey Goalie*

Tyler Sather (12), hockey goalie of 14 years, appreciates the growth of the winter sport and understands the competition present on the Olympic rink.

"The rivalry between U.S. and Canadian hockey (is what I like most about the Olympics)," Tyler Sather said. "It's just the best players in the world playing (...) on the best rink."

Unfortunately, the benefits of the winter event go underappreciated. The Winter Olympics lags behind its summer counterpart in viewer ratings and worldwide anticipation.

With less time and a lack of passion to watch, people lose an aspect of the Olympics which used to be celebrated.

In 1990, when the Winter Olympics branched off from the Summer Games, its importance, paralleled to the Summer Olympics, vanished as quickly as the snow in which participants competed.

"I think (the low viewership is) kind of ridiculous," Tyler Sather said. "I feel like if people just gave it a chance rather than passing on, it would be watched a lot more."

Despite the separation, both possess the potential to tie nations together. The Olympics reward lifetimes of hard work and enhance the meaning of sports for all ages and abilities.

"When (Olympians) play the sport that you love it just makes it that much more interesting because you know what's going on," Tyler Sather said. "Just that they represent American kids playing hockey has made American hockey a lot bigger than it was even four years ago."

The Olympics' inimitable capability to simultaneously amuse and influence comes from its long-standing tradition of uniting the world by one of the few cultural similarities countries share.

In the Olympic Games, the sport is the language; no longer are the people of separate origins as different as they may seem.

The Winter Olympics have only been hosted in the Northern Hemisphere.

The United States has won more medals, 2,189, than any country at the Summer Olympics.

The five Olympic rings represent Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe and Oceana.

Only four athletes have won medals in both the Winter and Summer Olympics.

In 2014, one leg of the torch went 200 miles above Earth outside the International Space Station.

Source: factmonster.com

Illustrations by William Ngo

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▶NEWS
ELearning has been approved to replace the previously added on school days to make up for the numerous school cancellations. **1**

▶OPINION
Students argue that it is irrational to complain about school on Good Friday when students of other religions don't get their holidays off. **3**

▶LIFE
The emcees prepare for their role in the annual variety show as they give a candid review of what it takes to emcee the show. **5**

▶SPORTS
Athletes attend outside training programs at AWP and Spiece in order to prepare and improve for their high school sports season. **7**

▶FEATURE
From skydiving to travel to concerts and festivals, students and faculty find time to cross items off of their bucket list. **8**

Friday, February 28, 2014 | A 2009 Pacemaker Winner | Homestead High School's News Source Since 1969

PHOTO BY WILLIAM NGO

Grace German (11) requests to take dual credit Spanish on her 2014-15 scheduling form.

Dual credit options expand

BY KATIE DUNLAP
News Editor

Select French and Spanish classes may be available for the 2014-15 school year, depending upon whether or not Ivy Tech approves the classes. Students who take one of these classes will receive a high school credit as well as an Ivy Tech credit.

Possible classes include Spanish III, Spanish IV, Spanish V/Advanced Placement (AP) Spanish, French III, French IV and French V. These classes would all be free of charge to high school students, unless the class they plan to take requires an entrance exam, which has a fee. Before the option of these classes is opened, Ivy Tech must approve the courses.

"We are in the process of applying to teach Levels III, IV and V of French and Spanish through Ivy Tech," Susan Summers, assistant principal, said.

According to the Proposed French/Spanish Dual Credit Opportunities PowerPoint available on MyBigCampus, students have to show they are eligible for dual credit opportunities by achieving a 46 or higher on the PSAT.

"Students qualify by having shown that they are college ready in the areas of reading, writing, and math," Summers said. "Their test scores on the PSAT, SAT and the Dual Credit Entrance Exam are used to show that students meet these requirements. Only students who do not receive qualifying scores on their PSAT and/or SAT have to take the Dual Credit Entrance Exam. Students need to complete the worksheet in their MBC class group to see if they should register to take the entrance exam."

> "The beauty of dual credit is that students are already doing the hard work, but now get recognized for that."
>
> **MEG UNDERWOOD**
> *French teacher*

Upon approval of the dual credit courses, students will have the opportunity to add the dual credit option when classes begin at the beginning of the 2014-15 school year. The students

▶ SEE 'DUAL CREDIT,' PAGE 2

A NEW NORM

eLearning to make up for recent snow days

PHOTO BY ALLIE NELSON

BY APARNA CHINTAPALLI
Writer

The irrational weather conditions over the past few weeks have deeply affected schools throughout Indiana with the accumulation of snow, extremely low temperatures and the adverse effects of wind chill. Schools have closed down multiple times and resorted to morning delays to make sure students reach school safely. The Southwest Allen County Schools (SACS) district has been one of the victims of this harsh winter with a total of thirteen cancellations and numerous delays at the date of publication.

Due to this lost school time, students and teachers are finding it increasingly difficult to make up for teaching lessons as the third quarter and many AP exams approach. In order to make up for this lost time, the SACS school board members have discussed various ways for students to catch up within their curricula, finally settling upon the concept of eLearning.

During the school board meeting on Feb. 18, Dr.Steve Yager, superintendent, and Dr.Phil Downs, associate superintendent, discussed the pilot implementation of eLearning within the SACS district. The goal of the virtual

▶ SEE 'ELEARNING,' PAGE 2

Possible tax cut to affect funding

BY HAMNA QURESHI
Writer

Indiana's state legislature is considering imposing a business personal property tax cut. This tax cut is intended to make Indiana's economy more business-friendly, but implementing this cut would reduce funding for local governments and school districts in Indiana, including SACS.

Keith Potter, the US government teacher, says this bill has the potential to attract more businesses to Indiana. This business, though, would come at the cost of funding for public schools.

"If the (business personal property tax) is lower, it will attract new business," Potter said. "But, that's also revenue that the state does not get."

This loss of revenue would cost schools in Indiana millions of dollars, according to the SACS district business manager, Jim Coplen.

"According to a study done by the Indiana Legislative Services Agency, the total loss in revenue to schools would be about $150 million if there was a total elimination of the (tax)," Coplen said. This amount would change to $31.2 million if only 30 percent of the tax was eliminated.

The SACS district would lose approximately $1.2 million if the entire tax was cut and would lose

> **▶1.2**
> million dollars could be lost by SACS if the tax cut is approved.

▶ SEE 'TAX CUTS,' PAGE 2

AP students still 'prepared' despite snow

BY MEGAN CATER
Copy Editor

Due to the substantial amount of class time missed because of the inclement weather, AP classes are struggling to cover all necessary material before AP testing dates, as testing dates will not be pushed back.

Although students have missed 12 days of school so far, they are still expected to be prepared to take the AP tests on their original dates. From May 5-16, students in all grade levels will partake in AP exams nationwide.

"(The AP tests) are (on) nationally set dates across the entire United States," Amy Hamilton, guidance counselor and AP coordinator, said. "Not every region across the country has experienced the delays that we have."

Because of the national importance of the AP tests, test dates will remain as scheduled. If the College Board changed the dates or offered the same test on different days throughout the country, the risk of sharing free response essay questions and specific information regarding the test would be greater.

To combat the problem, AP teachers are using the school laptops to their advantage. Students in AP classes may be expected to participate in online discussions or complete required work online

▶ SEE 'AP STUDENTS,' PAGE 2

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY WILLIAM NGO

Matt Hamilton (11) works on projects using his laptop outside of school.

REMINDER

Annual college fair continues to expose students to postsecondary options

Homestead will be hosting its annual College Fair from 6:30-7:30 p.m. on Monday, March 10 at Homestead.

Over 80 four-year universities, two-year colleges and vocational schools located throughout the United States are anticipated to be in attendance and available to speak with students and parents. Representatives from the Armed Services and financial institutions are expected as well.

The program is open to the public with no admission charge. Additionally, one junior or senior student will be awarded a $200 scholarship.

Students receive new email accounts

New SACS Gmail accounts to 'enhance communication' between students, teachers

BY ETHAN ZWEIG
Writer

Email accounts have been created for each student, allowing more direct contact between teachers and students, both inside and outside of school. The accounts, which can be accessed at school and at home, also allow students to interact with each other in new ways.

Although the email accounts are already created, they are still a new concept, and they may not be of significant use yet.

"(These emails will) enhance communication and collaboration with students," Don Chase, Director of Technology, said. "Overall, the implementation of email is part of providing students with Google Apps that provides a way for students to collaborate on projects and eLearning initiative."

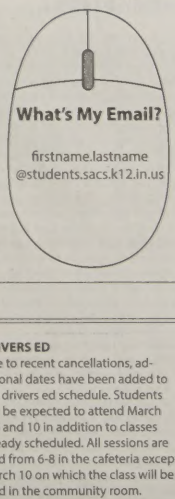
The emails are currently only available to high school students, but plans are being made to include other schools.

"We are starting with high school students, then middle school students will be next," Chase said. "It is unknown at this time if SACS will provide emails to elementary students."

Many teachers are already offering the information to students. However, many of the students are still unaware that the accounts exist, or how to access them.

"I didn't know about them until recently," Drake White (11) said. "I

▶ SEE 'EMAIL,' PAGE 2



BRIEFS

ACADEMIC DECATHLON
Congratulations to the academic decathlon team which came in fifth at the state competition. There were eleven individual medals including two gold medals, two silver medals, and five bronze medals. Alyssa Hoffman (12) placed third overall in the scholastic division.

BASKETBALL GAMES
Any patrons planning to attend any upcoming basketball games are requested to now arrive early in order to secure a seat. Once the gym has reached capacity the doors will be locked. Seats are available on a first come first serve basis. Those with season passes are not necessarily guaranteed a seat.

PRACTICE SAT/ACT EXAMS
The parent club is offering practice SAT and SAT exams scheduled to take place at 8 a.m. March 15 at Homestead High school. The cost is $33 per exam with multiple exams available. Student check-in begins at 8 a.m and the test will be over around 1:30 p.m. Registration packets are due today, Feb. 28.

NATIONAL MERIT FINALISTS
Congratulations to Ben Landrigan (12), Erik Overdahl (12), Marielle Cabe (12) and Natalie Hawken (12), all of whom were recently name National Merit Finalists. These students were selected based on their 2012 PSAT scores, principal endorsement, outstanding grades and SAT scores.

DRIVERS ED
Due to recent cancellations, additional dates have been added to the drivers ed schedule. Students will be expected to attend March 5, 6 and 10 in addition to classes already scheduled. All sessions are held from 6-8 in the cafeteria except March 10 on which the class will be held in the community room.

▶ELEARNING CONTINUED FROM 1

learning concept is to allow students to complete lesson work and other activities outside of the traditional classroom setting. In effect, students will receive formal instruction while being exposed to informational, visual and technological literacy. The goal for high school students is to make up for thirty hours of lost classroom time.

The lesson design is based on two options: standalone eLearning module option or the sequential eLearning module option. The standalone option allows teachers to create one 270-minute online module that covers a complete unit; this unit would require students to complete work in sequence with classroom lessons and would be finished by the end of the final week. The sequential mode option allows teachers to create four 65-minute modules that can, if needed, fit into sequential classroom lessons; the modules would then be completed in the evening, allowing students to be prepared for class the next day. Students would be required to complete either seven units or 21 modules, totaling around 30 hours of classroom learning over the course of an eight week period to make-up five days' worth of course work in each class.

"Ideally we want students to have their workloads distributed through the week, not so that it is burdensome, but so they can complete their work in an effective and accessible manner," Downs said.

PHOTO BY REAGAN MIKESELL

Students in seminar work diligently on their laptops. Once eLearning officially begins, students will have work to complete online as well as their class work.

After evaluating many other options for making up school days, the school board settled on the fact that eLearning is the best option for coping with snow make-up days because it does not conflict with overtime issues with teachers, the after-school activities of students and the overall family activities of many SACS residents. At the board meeting, Yager pointed out signing a waiver to simply excuse snow days "would be an insufficient use of taxpayers' money," and added that "we can save taxpayers thousands of dollars through eLearning due to its accessible and productive capabilities."

Park Ginder, principal, made it clear that he supports this technological-based learning for he was a primary part of setting up the virtual learning proposal.

"Our goal is to implement this program by March 3, and although it is going to be applied at a large scale, teachers can make subjective decisions on how they want to align their classroom lessons to various online programs like Google docs, blogging, photo-sharing, Skype, etc.," Ginder said.

With expanding educational opportunities and the availability of online instruction, it was only natural that school officials sought technological support for setting students back on track for academic learning. This opportunity of eLearning is not only based around making up school time, but also for funding students and teachers to progress in an unprecedented manner.

"There is really no sense for us to have any more snow days with all of these efficient opportunities we have at hand," Yager said.

▶EMAIL CONTINUED FROM 1

think it definitely makes contacting people a lot easier though. If you have a (group) project to do, you can contact the other people easily."

The student emails offer access to various Google Applications, such as Google Drive, an instant sharing feature, and an online calendar, along with the ability to send files to teachers and other students, which could make online assignments and online learning easier.

"I guess sometimes we need to enter emails for accounts like Turnitin.com or something," Annabelle Whetsel (9) said. "But I already have a personal email so I don't get why I'd use the student one. It could replace Turnitin.com, but it could be awfully disorganized for the teachers, while Turnitin.com has classes and groups premade."

The student emails could also begin to phase out MyBigCampus due to the email accounts and the additional options available because of them.

> "(These emails will) enhance communication and collaboration with students."
>
> **DON CHASE**
> *Director of Technology*

"We aren't allowed to message people over MyBigCampus(while we can by email)," White said. "Sure it may be a distraction sometimes, but I assume it's all surveyed."

The email accounts could also improve individual contact between teachers and students.

"It can allow faster communication," White said. "Since most forms of email are blocked in school, we have to wait to get home to email a teacher from a home computer."

The school internet network will not be slowed down by the addition of the email accounts.

"All emails are (handled) by Google, so other than the Internet use, there shouldn't be any affect on the SACS network," Chase said. "Since it uses Google Apps and Gmail, students will be able to access them anywhere with an Internet connection."

Unfortunately, there are still many issues to the emails, such as users being blocked out before logging in for the first time.

"They're having huge issues," Nicole Detter-Smith, librarian, said. "Everyone is having trouble and they're asking students to just hold out for now until teachers get further instructions."

Overall, while there is much added to the education of students, most students seem unaffected by the creation of the accounts.

"We were doing just fine without them," Whetsel said. "They're not a bad thing, but I most likely won't be using mine."

▶TAX CUT CONTINUED FROM 1

$277,000 if only 30 percent of the tax was eliminated.

The money that the district would lose would most likely come out from teachers' salaries, according to Potter. A large portion of district funds are allocated towards paying teachers, so cutting funding could result in cutting staff members.

"There's a little bit you can cut (from the budget) around the edges, but if you want to save money, you have to cut (staff)," Potter said.

Coplen reaffirms the stance that the district would be losing significant amounts of money.

"Schools and other governmental units are hopeful the loss in revenues would be offset by a replacement of some sort," Coplen said. "Basically, we would have to make budget cuts in our property tax supported funds, where possible."

While Coplen and Potter both agree this legislation could have negative impacts on funding for public schools, this bill could also make Indiana a more business-friendly state.

"If this tax cut would result in some business growth (...), some school corporations could benefit from additional students and increased property assessed values within their district," Coplen said.

Potter says that this tax cut could pay off for schools and local governments in the long run, despite its adverse effects in the short-term.

"Enough new business and new jobs will recuperate this money," Potter said. "Eventually, we will get our money back."

While the tax cut holds possible benefits, not everyone believes that these benefits outweigh the risks of the legislation. Karina Abramowski (12), does not think school funding should be compromised in favor of a more business-friendly environment.

"I think education should always be a priority," Abramowski said. "Business is great and I think Indiana needs to attract more innovative operations, but not at the expense of children."

Coplen agrees that this legislation will not benefit business enough to warrant school funding cuts.

"I believe this legislation has an overall negative effect on the economy in Indiana," Coplen said. "It may be good for business, but I don't believe the tax cut would have a resulting equal growth of our economy across the state of Indiana."

Whether or not the legislation will benefit the economy will take a long period of time to assess, thus making it a risk for the state.

"(The tax cut) is a goal to get to in the long run," Potter said, "Right now, it is too much too soon."

▶AP STUDENTS CONTINUED FROM 1

through My Big Campus or other educational websites.

"For the last four or five canceled days, we have been doing eLearning. My AP students log into a website and are able to talk to me, message me and see what is on my laptop screen," Bekki Vail, AP Biology teacher, said. "I've used My Big Campus and posted a lot of different activities that they can look at."

Although eLearning has provided an alternative to AP classes falling behind, it may not provide the same educational experience to students.

"I'm concerned that I won't be as prepared as previous years because of the time constraint," Alexandra Natoli (12) said. "I will have to put in more time outside of class."

Learning online may be more difficult for some students compared to learning in a face-to-face atmosphere.

"The last unit that we tested over, the students had a lot of days that we missed and e-days so it wasn't as fluid as it had been the year before," Vail said. "I think that we're going to have to spend additional time when we do our review before the AP test working on reviewing that material especially."

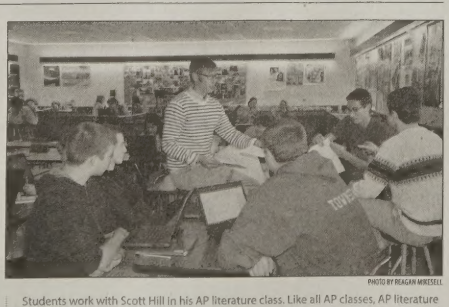


PHOTO BY REAGAN MIKESELL

Students work with Scott Hill in his AP literature class. Like all AP classes, AP literature students are responsible for the content that they will be tested over during the May AP exam, and have the same expectations after the cancellations as they did before.

Due to the extensive material covered in AP classes, students may meet outside of school with teachers to review the necessary content covered on the AP test.

"I know that some of the AP teachers have been doing some of their own communications with their students while they were on snow days," Hamilton said. Saturday review sessions are common during the months of March, April and early May.

"We've already met on a Saturday and we'll have more Saturday review sessions into March just so they feel comfortable with the material and do as well as they can," Vail said.

Along with teacher help, students create study groups for different classes. The popular "Princeton Review" AP study books also give students access to questions similar to that of the AP exams.

"I do believe that our AP teachers are very proud of the scores our kids receive and want them to do well," Hamilton said.

HOMESTEAD DEBUNKED

Myth: Unidentified substances are leaking from the ceiling in the English hallway.

Status: True - Although there is a leak in the hallway, the leakage is only water, not any other substances.

The leakage may not be radioactive goo that will give those who come in contact with it superpowers, but it still proves as a major inconvenience for the school. Because this water has leaked through the roof and onto walls and floors, part of the English hallway has been blocked off. With this area unavailable, students have had to find new ways to classes, often causing an inconvenience while getting there.

"There is just so much snow and ice on the ground, it's a mess," Pete Carteaux, custodian, said. Outside roads are clearly not the only places having to deal with this crazy, unexpected amount of snow our area has received this winter.

To clarify, the leak has seemed to put students off guard with the brownish color it is presenting, but it can be assured it is only water seeping down the walls and through the roof.

When this leak will be permanently fixed is unknown; administration is currently trying to get the roof companies to patch it up for the current time being. The permanent fix is not expected until summer, so this makes students and faculty wonder if this area will be blocked off all winter. This bad roof leakage leaves unanswered questions of when students will be able to move through the English hallway smoothly and without difficult detours.

As of now, there are buckets placed in specific areas to catch falling water along with towels against the wall. Yellow caution tape has been placed around the leak making it very clear students are not able to pass through. Until a permanent fix is in order, administration is working on ways to stop the leak and allow the normal flow in the hallway to be restored.

--Sydney Isroff

▶DUAL CREDIT CONTINUED FROM 1

choosing to participate in one of the courses will not have to change classes or their schedule. The foreign language classes will be offered as non-dual credit as well, but the content of both classes will be the same.

"The beauty of dual credit is that students are already doing the hard work, but now get recognized for that," Meg Underwood, French teacher, said.

If a student decides they no longer want to participate in the dual credit option after signing up, they can drop the dual credit label by October 2014, according to the PowerPoint. These students will remain in the same class and continue with the same level of course work but will not receive college credit.

An entrance exam is required for Spanish IV, Spanish V/AP Spanish, French IV, and French V classes. Given at four locations in Fort Wayne, this exam costs $80 and consists of 120 questions in 90 minutes. Depending upon how well students do, they automatically earn college credit for classes proceeding the one they are choosing to enter.

"Homestead has offered the Dual Credit Entrance Exam three times this quarter, and students can sign up for the next round of testing until February 25," Summers said. "It is possible that there may be a final round of exam days after Spring Break, but those have not been confirmed at this time."

The administration hopes Ivy Tech will have approved the courses by the end of the school year. Teachers are excited for this opportunity for students to receive college credit for their work.

"I'm excited that HHS arranged this opportunity for students," Underwood said. "I hope it means that more students will take elective classes to take advantage of dual credit. It makes me feel like being in my class has one more incentive."

Students planning on taking the dual credit courses are likewise excited to earn college credit without leaving the campus.

"(Dual credit courses) count the same as a college class, while it's still the regular class (students take in high school)," Grace German(11), Spanish student, said.

While there is no guarantee of transferability, the credits earned in the foreign language dual credit classes will likely transfer to colleges such as Ball State, Indiana State, IPFW, IU-Bloomington, and Purdue-W. Lafayette, as equivalents to courses offered at the college. Students choosing to take dual credit foreign language will see many benefits after they leave high school.

"The most important reason is that studies show that students who take Advanced Placement and Dual Credit courses have a greater level of success when they go on to four-year degree programs, two-year degree programs, or certification and licensure program," Summers said. "They are more likely to graduate on time or early. They are more likely to have academic success their first year away from high school. They are also more likely to remain enrolled in their post-secondary institution and more likely to earn a degree than students who do not take AP or DC while in high school."

the SPARTANA
STAFF & EDITORIAL POLICY 2013-2014

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OPINION

Girl Scout cookies, 4

PHOTO BY ALLIE NELSON

Success depends on prioritizing, simply making plans to actualize goals

BY KYLIE POLING
Opinion Editor

Many people are driven by the intrinsic desire to succeed. In doing so, they prioritize. As humans, we are incapable of doing everything--we all know that. Because of this principle, it becomes especially pertinent that we develop a hierarchy of goals and actions we deem necessary to fulfill those goals. This means you can be proficient in one field, but average in another.

It's all about balance, doing what we need to accomplish our personal goals and objectives.

We must focus on proactive goals instead of the menial tasks that have no impact on our lives on the grand scheme of things if we want to succeed in anything.

Here are my top five tips and tricks for being successful with the least amount of work:

1. Learn to skim read and still comprehend what you're reading. I cannot tell you how important this is and will be in the entirety of your life. It's simply not practical to read every single word you see in your life. As such, once you've mastered skim reading, you will be able to read things faster and still maintain a high comprehension rate, if not higher than before. In doing so, you can maximize the amount of time spent actually spent directly focused on a goal.

2. Know what you're good at. This is all about trial and error. If you find something that you do really well and you enjoy doing it, then for goodness sake keep doing it. You do your best work when you enjoy it and being naturally good at something can give you the little boost of confidence that could send you to unimaginable success.

3. Know what you want. Now, this should be the easiest part about being successful, but, oftentimes, it's one of the hardest. Knowing what you want is tricky because sometimes you want something but you know it has a .0000000001 percent chance of happening--in my case, that's another Harry Potter book--and other times, you can't decide if you want to focus on short or long-term goals. I advise you to make a list. Write down everything you want, weed out the unattainable goals, then sort out the short and long-term ones.

"Write down everything you want, weed out the unattainable goals, then sort out the short and long-term ones."

KYLIE POLING

4. Know how you'll get what you want. Once you've defined what your goals are, you'll have to figure out how to attain them. This is easily the most difficult part because there are infinite options to get to the end result you want, and even if you do everything you could possibly think of, you may still not be able to reach your goals. And that's where my fifth tip because the most important.

5. Above all, don't be afraid to fail. You win some, you lose some. That's the way life is. It's virtually impossible to be the best at everything and you would overwork yourself to even try. It's okay to fail. Actually, it's probably best that you sometimes fail--because from failure comes experience and from failure also stems the opportunity for growth. Failing at something allows you to reevaluate situations from an entirely new perspective. So don't be afraid to fail, because something good will come from it.

So really, success is simple; it's knowing what you want and taking a pragmatic approach to it. In doing so, you set yourself up for the attainment of your goals.

Visit hhsspartana.com for updates, sports coverage and photos.

twitter take

The Spartana attempts to capture the most impulsive responses on Twitter.

Question: "What kind of cookies should Girl Scouts make next?"

@jessicakelley18 - Jessica Kelley (12) ▶ "I'm still waiting for someone to come to my door so I can buy the existing flavors.."

@karsynHopps - Karsyn Hopps (9) ▶ "The souls of my enemies w/ chocolate sprinkles."

@hamilfun - Matt Hamilton (11) ▶ "Celery."

@PeckCheck- Ally Peck (12) ▶ "Baja Blast."

@Uncle_SAMta- Sam Kenchanh (10) ▶ "Bacon, cause why not?"

Higher wages to lead to problems

Raising of minimum wage detrimental to employment, vulnerable economy

BY KYLIE POLING
Opinion Editor

On Jan. 12, President Obama signed an executive order to raise the minimum wage of federal contractors to $10.10/hour in the hopes of boosting the economy. Obama has also implored employers to increase pay of employees while he and his administration work to raise the federal minimum wage. Raising minimum wage would not be a priority, had the national disaster known as the Affordable Care Act never taken effect.

The Washington Examiner states: "President Obama's national health care law will cost $1.76 trillion over a decade, according to a new projection released today by the Congressional Budget Office [CBO], rather than the $940 billion forecast when it was signed into law." In light of this news, it is easy to see the skewed state of the US economy. Most Americans did not receive as large of a tax refund as they had originally anticipated, and the reason can be traced to the ACA. The government is trying to make up for its failure of a health care system by "stimulating" the economy with money that most people and companies do not have.

What people do not realize is that increasing minimum wage cuts the amount of workers that a company can afford. Now, with employers being required to pay for employees' health insurance, employers must spend more to accord with the law. Employers are having to support their companies with money that just is not there, which subsequently affects jobs. This means that American jobs are at stake because there will be so many additional costs for business owners that cannot be accommodated unless the number of workers is reduced.

Yes, having a minimum wage job is in no way an ideal situation--but it is a job. That's better than 6.6 percent of the national population, which do not have any work at all, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The important thing about having a minimum wage job is that it earns money. It is difficult to support a family on a minimum wage job. It is possible, but requires careful financial planning and frugal spending, oftentimes not meeting the standards which a worker has set for him or her self. The concept behind this principle is simple, yet tragically underrated: living within your means.

Living within your means is not universally understood. The concept affects how income is spent on the tight budget necessitates. Essentially, living within your means entails taking care of the essentials, like housing and food, before thinking about things not vital to daily life, like buying the new iPhone or going to see the latest movie. Living within your means requires taking into consideration the fact that, sometimes, concessions need to be made.

For example, if you found the house of your dreams but the costs associated with purchasing the home would deplete your food or utility budget, then you should buy a house that would not affect your other expenses, even if the more affordable house is not exactly what you wanted. That's a concession that occurs with high frequency in the US, but that's the way things are in a pragmatic sense.

This isn't even a problem isolated to minimum wage jobs--it can be applied to all wage groups, including the government, as all financial decisions need to be made within the parameters available. As high school students, we tend to misconstrue these expenses as something to worry about later as it does not immediately affect us; however, this should not be the case. We should be planning for our futures by learning better financial habits and enforcing the ideal of living within our means.

Living on any budget is directly correlated to spending habits. Raising minimum wage would not aid the economy; it would cost jobs, an estimated half a million, according to the CBO's report. This is not the answer to fixing the US economy, rather, it is the catalyst that would send the US further into economic collapse.

$7.25 per hour	$10.10 per hour
State minimum wage for all employees as of 2013.	Hourly pay set for federal contractors by bill signed Jan. 12

CARTOON BY EMILY SPATT

School on holy day necessary

Attending classes on Good Friday does not lessen meaning of date

BY KATIE MAHER
Writer

To make up for the weeks lost due to snow days, students will now be attending school on Good Friday, April 18.

School is usually out of session on the day of the Christian holiday and some students believe it is wrong to be forced to attend school on a religious holy day of obligation to make up for the lost days caused by inclement weather.

Even though the make-up day does interfere with the Christian holiday, students need to put into consideration the students that practice non-Christian religions who never get their holy days off of school.

Having school in session on Good Friday is not an attack on the Christian faith, but is instead a plan put into action that keeps students from being in the classroom until mid-June. If it was any other year, students might have more of an argument to have the day off, but with the amount of school days missed from this frigid winter, having school in session on holidays really is for students' best interest. In doing so, it is ensured that summer will start sooner than it otherwise would have, seeing as if the administration did not decide to hold school on days like President's Day and Good Friday, students would have to stay in school for two weeks longer.

Of course, not having Good Friday off does not mean students cannot use an excused absence to celebrate. If a student's parents really do not want their child in school on the holiday, they are able to call in an excused absence. According to the school handbook, students can have up to 10 excused absences a year and parents do not have to even give a reason for why their child will not be at school. Remember that an excused absence only counts of the parent calls in.

Parents of students who practice non-Christian religions like Islam or Judaism often call the attendance office for an excused absence for similar situations because unlike most of the Christian holidays where school is usually out, those students are not dismissed from school during their religious or cultural holidays.

So is it unfair and unjust for school to be in session on Good Friday? Not really. If viewing the situation through the eyes of a student that does not get the advantages of usually having the days off on their religious holidays, being in school on Good Friday justifies equality.

eLearning provides logical option

Passing of ten-week program necessary to keep summer vacations intact

As a result of the recent abundance of weather-related cancellations, the district school board and state Board of Education made the wise and appropriate decision to approve eLearning curriculum to make up for time lost due to inclement weather. Despite some concern as to whether or not technology would be an effective medium for teacher instruction, approving the program is the most productive and universally appealing decision.

By approving eLearning, the school board not only found a solution to this year's problem, but also created a virtual safety net for the future. While confusion regarding the logistics of how eLearning will work is a legitimate concern at the present time, it's difficult to ignore the long-term potential that this teaching style presents. In the future, if eLearning is successful, students may never have to make-up a snow day in the classroom. Instead of adding on days to the end of the year, the time can instead be spent at home using virtual lessons on the computer. eLearning forms a mutualistic relationship between administrators and students--material is still covered and school is still dismissed on time.

Although eLearning is promising, it is not perfect. Fears are circulating which argue eLearning will not be good enough because it is impossible for adequate instruction to be given through a computer. Others are concerned that this new technology will one day replace teachers. But what skeptics don't understand is that eLearning doesn't fit into either of those extremes; it lies in the middle of the two worries.

Technology isn't necessarily the most ideal way of being taught--the screens can give headaches, it can cause auditory and tactile learners to have more difficulty grasping subjects--but no one is proposing that eLearning replace common curriculum. It would be impossible to receive the same quality education online as students do in person. It is not ideal for 180 days, but to make-up for several days of instruction, it's the best option there is.

When it comes to snow make-up, it's not a question of what make-up method has the most to offer, but rather which method has the least to take away. Other proposed tactics included Saturday school and adding on an hour to the school day, two methods that take motivation away from high schoolers, and much needed concentration away from those in elementary school. Another proposal was to continue to add days onto the school year until they were all made up. This method would force seniors to return to school in order to take their finals after they graduate, increasing unrest amongst the senior student body and angering parents who had made vacation plans. eLearning is the only way to keep the schedules of faculties and families on track.

As a student body, it's encouraging to see administrators working to find the best solution possible, a much needed reminder that when it comes to the interest of students, the school board is truly working to find the best options for all involved.

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{The Bottom Line} *The implementation of the most convenient option reassures students and teachers of school board's positive intentions.*

PHOTO BY WILLIAM NGO

Girl Scout cookies maintain large following

Students continue to anticipate annual debut of adored snacks, stock up on favorite flavors

By Jessica Tebben
Life Editor

After the first Girl Scout cookies were baked and sold in Oklahoma in 1917, according to girlscouts.org, the delicious treats melted into stomachs across the nation, as their heart. Girl Scout cookies, sold during late winter, have gained popularity as Girl Scouts go from door to door in hopes of selling a few boxes.

The flavors of cookies sold in the Fort Wayne include: Thin Mints, Caramel deLites, Peanut Butter Patties, Shortbread, Peanut Butter Sandwich, Lemonades, Thanks-A-Lot and, a new addition to this season's line-up, Thank U Berry Much. Thin Mints and Peanut Butter Patties are among the classic favorites, but the new cookie is proving to be worth a taste.

"(Thank U Berry Much cookies) are refreshing and low in calories," Haley Wetherill (11) said. "One serving is four cookies, so they are the perfect treat."

Looking at the group as a whole, each cookie has its own unique taste ensuring everyone who invests in a box of Girl Scout cookies is satisfied by his or her favorite flavor. Another factor that motivates customers to buy the cookies is the short season. Lasting only a few months each winter, cookie lovers everywhere scramble to stock up on cookies until the next season.

"The (cookie) obsession begins when you discover your favorite flavor," Celeste Fendt (10) said. "I (also) think people like them so much because of their taste and convenient size."

Not only does buying cookies help to curb the cravings of Girl Scout cookie fanatics, but it also helps Girl Scouts build strong futures in business, money management and social relations.

"I think (selling cookies) helped me with people skills and it kind of shows you what selling stuff is like in the real world," Sydney Shanley (10), former Girl Scout, said. "I didn't like going door to door, but I liked selling (cookies) in the stores."

Many cookies are bought from girls selling door-to-door, but many more are obtained by a buyer through a connection they have, whether it's a little sister, a cousin or a daughter. No matter where the cookies are purchased from, all of the revenue goes to the local Girl Scout council, according to girlscouts.org.

"We buy from our neighbors," Wetherill said. "We don't buy from the ones at grocery stores because our loyalty is to the Girl Scouts we know and want to support."

Although there are prizes such as badges and individual travel experiences for selling certain amounts of Girl Scout cookies, according to girlscouts.org, the real reward comes from the memories made as a Girl Scout.

"When I was in Girl Scouts, people didn't really care about the badges," Shanley said. "We just kind of like going places. I remember when we went to Build-A-Bear and it was a huge deal. I think (the reward) was just kind of the experience."

Despite their wild popularity, Girl Scout cookies are only available for a few months each year, and people across the school, as well as the United States, wait patiently for Girl Scout cookie season to begin again so they can stock up until the next year. The long wait, according to Fendt, makes the cookies all the more enjoyable.

"The anticipation of waiting for (the Girl Scout cookies) all year makes them ten times better," Fendt said.

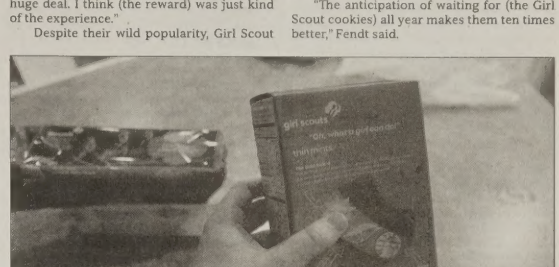


PHOTO BY ALLIE WILSON

Girl Scout Cookie classics and newer favorites come together to make up current line of flavors.

Love is (ALWAYS) in the Air

Despite unrealistic plots, romances provide 'a good chance of hope'

By William Ngo
Executive Editor

Valentine's Day lasts 24 hours, but love is in the air year-round as romantic comedies hit the silver screen. The endearing genre clearly remains a crowd favorite; it has already sold more than 6,000,000 ticket stubs just this year, according to the-numbers.com. The majority of rom-coms, however, portray the beginning, end and re-beginning of relationships using a cliché plotline formula: the opposite attraction, the build-up, the troubling incident, the make-up and the happily ever after.

"People can make (happy endings) happen," Josie Walters (11) said. "(Rom-coms) get me on my feelings. Sometimes you need a good chance of hope."

JOSEE WALTERS (11)
Romantic Comedy Enthusiast

The phrase "opposites attract" applies to both chemistry and movie scripts.

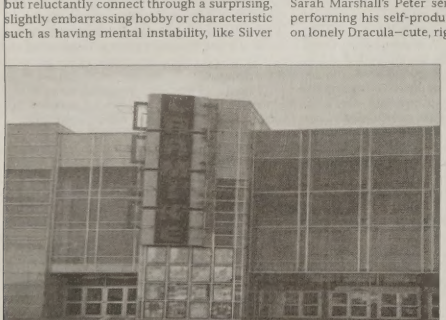
Boy and girl come from two different worlds but reluctantly connect through a surprising, slightly embarrassing hobby or characteristic such as having mental instability, like Silver Linings Playbook. Despite denial, the two characters are an absolute match since they can understand each other's secretly damaged backgrounds.

"I don't really watch (rom-coms) because they're not usually realistic," Harpreet Singh (10) said. "If a girl likes basketball and a guy likes basketball though, I could believe it."

After initial stages in the young relationship, boy and girl bond beyond their shared similarity. Even if the relationship has yet to be publicly announced, the hopeless romantics begin to hold hands and share food. The boy pays for her dinner, and the girl wears his football jersey. This is the perfect time to insert an uplifting love montage too.

Some movies set themselves apart by adding unique and odd twists. Forgetting Sarah Marshall's Peter serenades Rachel by performing his self-produced musical based on lonely Dracula–cute, right?

"My favorite part (of a rom-com) is the slow relationship building because it shows how they fall in love," Alicia Cuellar (12) said. "(My boyfriend and I) are able to laugh at each other, which is one reason I think we have such a strong relationship. Most romantic comedies display that."



PHOTOS BY MEGAN BUTLER

True love is not true unless something goes entirely wrong, which is how films depict it. Tragedy splits the lovebirds into two, sending boy and girl their separate ways.

In Click, Michael forgets to tell his wife he used a time control remote to fast forward every moment in their marriage. Oops. Heartbreak undoubtedly follows a grave mistake like that.

During troubling incidents in rom-coms, the audience passionately cries for boy to apologize but the dye has been cast. Girl pitches the adorable photo booth pictures, which captured her first kiss.

When the pictures are in the trashcan though, girl sees a handwritten love message on the back. It is make-up time. Those tears from the troubling incident have no place here.

After magically morphing into a teen in 17 Again, Mark realizes his boundless love for his wife. During his most important basketball game, Mark ditches the court to apologize to his wife. Magic happens again, and he turns back into a happier middle-aged man. Guaranteed happiness begins with an apology, according to rom-coms.

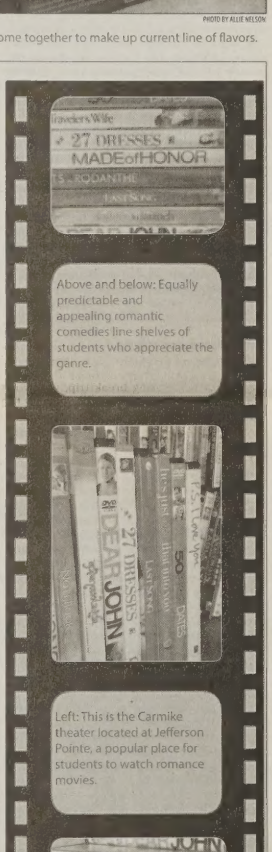
"People can make (happy endings) happen," Josee Walters (11) said. "(Rom-coms) get me on my feelings. Sometimes you need a good chance of hope."

Once tensions dissolve, boy and girl live together in eternal bliss. Tears may occur here too, but they will be good tears.

The main lesson of rom-coms is this: do not condemn love. That is also the same message Toula from My Big Fat Greek Wedding tells her beautiful daughter in an epilogue scene set six years in the future.

Rom-coms provide corny jokes and potential date ideas, but even though the conclusions provide short relief, the fiction films portray only a partial reality.

"I find a lot of (happy endings) not relatable because real life doesn'tBy stop at the happily ever after," Cuellar said. "It just keeps going on to the next struggle and once you conquer that, there's another struggle. Life is all about the ups and downs."



Above and below: Equally predictable and appealing romantic comedies line shelves of students who appreciate the genre.

Left: This is the Carmike theater located at Jefferson Pointe, a popular place for students to watch romance movies.

Pinterest leaps forward among social websites

Virtual pinboard intrigues users with diverse categories of ideas, motivates students to complete goals

By Tessa Virgillio
Writer

Distinguishing itself amongst the crowd, one relatively new social media site is pushing other competitors such as Facebook and Twitter aside to step up as a valuable source for business and creativity.

In a whirlwind of social media sites battling to climb the totem pole, Pinterest managed to be the fastest stand-alone site to smash the 10 million visitor mark and is now the third most popular social site, according to socialmediatoday.com.

The online bulletin board entices kids and adults alike to "pin" and "repin" their preferred retailers, DIY's, attractive hairdos and how-to's since 2010.

"It's just different (than Facebook and Twitter) because they're more profile -oriented and people-oriented, but Pinterest is mostly based around pictures and stuff like that," Lauren Bond (9) said.

A clever classroom craft or a nifty bedroom décor innovation is pinned with the click of a red, cursive-inscribed button. There is scarce room for selfies and Sanpchat snapshots, as a mere 20 percent of all images on Pinterest include a face, according to socialmediatoday.com.A user's profile consists of the basic biography and profile picture and is laid out with the user's personal "boards." Users may name a board "My Style" or "Craft Ideas" among others to display to their personal interests in those categories to their followers.

"Pinterest (has) more photography and has more ways to display your art."

LAUREN BOND (9)
Pinterest User

"I share healthy meals, funny cat pictures and stuff to do with everyday things," Brooklyn Ward (9) said.

As people log in to Pinterest, many are in pursuit of an inspiring quote to share or a sparkling idea. Surprisingly, most users are between the ages of 25 and 34, according to searchenginejournal.com, making the site relevant to teachers as well as students.

"I used (Pinterest) a couple times," Nicole Vickrey, English teacher, said. "(I usually use it) for just quick, daily assignments or formative assessments, just different ideas to do quick checks with (students). Also (I use Pinterest) for bulletin board ideas."

Pinterest is more than the average teenage gossip site. With less than one percent of posts have a negative tone, according to searchenginejournal.com, it is a more cheerful, positive environment to communicate hobbies and passions.

"I think Pinterest (has) more photography and has more ways to display your art, at least from what I have seen," Luis Ortiz (10) said.

With 79 percent of its users being women, Pinterest does not attract the population as well as other social media sites, according to wishpond.com.

"I don't necessarily find (Pinterest) that interesting," Ortiz said. "I want a more direct way to contact my friends to see what they're up to, and (Facebook and Twitter) do that."

Paul Sciarra, Evan Sharp and Ben Silbermann, developers of Pinterest, most likely did not foresee the potential explosion of the site, primarily with women, in only one year's time.

"I think Pinterest is getting more popular because people are trying more to save money and (Pinterest helps them to) see how to do more stuff around the house," Ward said.

The popularity of a site would not cultivate without its teenage and adult fans that make up a majority of their user base, and to have that many people involved, the site must have a hook.

"I like (Pinterest) because it's different than just Googling something because you know it's something that people have recommended," Vickrey said.

PHOTO BY WILLIAM NGO

Anna Sagstetter (11) and Erin Dobbs (11) refer to a Latin question word chart which was inspired by a craft idea on Pinterest.

Financial safety requires stategy and planning

Everyone has something he wants to save up for, whether it's concert tickets or three hundred boxes of mac and cheese. Saving money can be easy, but I find it difficult to keep more than 20 dollars in my wallet.

The difficult thing about saving money is all the tiny knickknacks you can buy between now and whenever you buy what you've been saving up for. You might think it's alright to buy that candy bar because it's only three dollars, but I'm here to tell you that you're wrong and you need to stop before you spend all the money you've saved on candy bars.

Maybe I'm not the most qualified person to tell you about money management since I spent $25 at Walgreens on makeup last week, but we can learn together.

JESS SAYIN'

BY JESSICA TEBBEN
Life Editor

The first thing you obviously have to do is find a way to make money. I would suggest getting a job, but if you don't feel like it you can ask your parents for money whenever you go out. Instead of giving the change back to them, keep it in your wallet.

They'll forget they even gave you money within twenty-four hours. If you don't feel comfortable being a dirty liar, you can always just ask your parents for an allowance.

After you've actually started to make money, you can now start saving it, which is the whole point here.

You can definitely save money by putting it into a savings account at the bank, but that's too easy and we're looking for a challenge.

One way to save money is by letting parents or siblings hide it. Of course, there's a chance when you actually need the money, they won't remember where it is. You could also find it by accident and then spend it. Or your parents or siblings could just take it and spend it. As you can see, this method requires a lot of trust on your part.

If you're not a trusting person, you should invest in a ceramic piggy banks you have to break in order to get your money out. It's so effective that even after you're finished saving up for that spring break trip, you won't even want to break the bank because it's too cute. That way, you'll never spend any money again!

"Remain strong. Everything will be okay when you finally buy that new guitar."

JESSICA TEBBEN

A more sentimental method of saving money is to remind yourself every morning what you're fighting for and every night before you go to bed why you're doing what you do. Remain strong. Everything will be okay when you finally buy that new guitar. Then you can write about your money management struggles.

All of these methods are effective and will save you money without forcing you to set up a savings account at the bank (you should probably do that anyway for college and stuff, but that's not what we're here for). But there is one way that will save you more money than any of the aforementioned methods: Never go shopping.

If you go shopping, you're just going to be tempted to buy things. You might think even convenience stores are safe, but like I said, one candy bar or one bottle of nail polish is going to turn into eight of each plus something you saw on a commercial once.

Don't go to the mall. Don't visit Amazon.com for just a few minutes. Temptation is everywhere when you go out, and you will spend all of your money in one trip if you decide to go shopping now.

Basically, don't go anywhere and you'll have enough money to buy whatever you want. It's going to be hard, but it will help you in the future when you're on your own and realize you have to save for a house of something that actually matters.

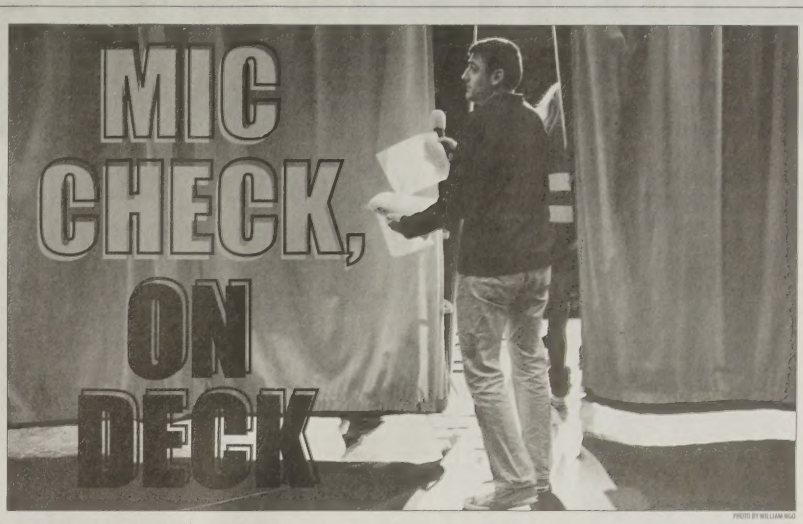


PHOTO BY WILLIAM RIGG

Bailey Houser (12) prepares to go through the theatre curtains. Houser hosted the Thursday night variety show during Just Because Week.

Annual talent show announces junior duo to cohost

BY AWBREI VACHON
Writer

Each year, the student body looks forward to the annual Variety Show, where peers with hidden talents take the stage in the auditorium to express themselves. What people do not realize, however, is how much work the hosts put into the show.

The senior emcees select two new junior hosts for the year, who will go on to be the senior hosts the following year and so on. Tryouts for this year's junior hosts took place Feb. 11 and 12.

"At first I was kind of nervous, (but) I was really excited (to be chosen)," Taylor Griffiths (11) said.

Nick Anderson (11) will also be hosting this year for the junior class. Both juniors are glad to have been given the opportunity to host, and are thrilled that seniors Jennifer Redden, Setareki Raisuni and Bailey Houser are there to show them the ropes of hosting.

"Given our anxiousness from last year, we felt like we kind of needed to help the junior hosts along, and they were more than willing to receive our help," Redden said.

Unlike previous years where the emcees had a good month to plan for the shows, the preparation period was drastically shortened this year. The hosts set aside a lot of late nights to make sure the lack of time did not show through in their scripts.

Moreover, Redden and Raisuni had to ask their good friend Houser to help fill in for the Wednesday night show since Raisuni was not going to be there.

"We were lucky enough to have Bailey be a part of the variety show and kind of help out," Raisuni said. "(And) it was really nice (to have) an extra opinion on things."

"We're just trying to keep it clean and trying to please everyone including the administration."

SETAREKI RAISUNI (12)
Variety Show Host

Working as a team, the senior and junior emcees combined all those opinions to ensure they had a funny, well-thought out script.

"I think the trick to making a show like this is to look for things that are current today that everybody can relate to, that everybody knows about so no one's left out of these jokes we're trying to make," Houser said.

In previous years, hosts have gotten in trouble for making inappropriate comments, and although the audience thought the jokes were funny, the administration did not find them amusing at all, so the emcees have to make sure they follow the set guidelines.

"We're just trying to keep it clean and trying to please everyone including the administration," Raisuni said.

Although the emcees have to abide by the school's rules, there are a couple of "rules" or norms the hosts are hoping to break or surpass; norms they don't quite agree with.

"In the past, the senior hosts would come out one act and then the junior hosts would come out," Redden said. "(...) This year we're trying to get the senior hosts and the junior hosts to go out there together and try to create a cohesiveness to kind of bring the school closer together and unify the grades."

Aside from cheering on the sports teams and performing arts groups, going to the Variety Show is a way to show support for peers who might not belong to an actual team, because these talents are no less important than the talents of recognized teams or groups.

The hosts agree it is an honor to be able to help acknowledge these students as well as bring everybody together to have a little bit of fun during the stressful school year.

"A perk for me is to just have a good time with my mates, and see some good talent and try to be creative and really explore the human mind and emotions that come along with being a host," Raisuni said.

Positive account surprises mass

Students combat negativity through uplifting personal messages

BY MALLORY MCCAULEY
Online Editor

In high school, there is bound to be negativity floating in the air, but the new Positive Homestead twitter account is making efforts to spread positivity instead.

Positive Homestead (@posihomestead) requests its 508 followers to direct message the account uplifting messages about their peers for the account owner to post anonymously for everyone to see, including the student who the message is about.

"I just really like brightening people's day and seeing their reaction," the anonymous Positive Homestead account owner said.

The account features tweets from students sharing positive thoughts and compliments about their peers for all of the account's followers to view. Ironically, the account owner was inspired by negativity to create this account of nothing but positivity. The negativity seen on Twitter and elsewhere has inspired students to create more positive environments.

"I kept seeing those 'high school confession' Twitter accounts, and I wanted to do something that made a good rather than bad impression," the account owner said. "Also, I've been following the Twitter user/motivational speaker snckpck (@ snckpck) recently who inspired me."

The "high school confession" Twitter accounts feature tweets revealing negative comments and rumors about students from high schools around the country. In stark contrast, this positive account is solely focused on putting smiles on students' faces. The account has obviously been putting positivity in the atmosphere and has lifted students' spirits.

"I was happy (to see a tweet about me on the account)," Sammi Warner (10) said. "I like the Positive Homestead account because people don't normally spread positivity, so seeing everyone submit something is great, and seeing one about yourself is extremely heart-warming."

Unlike the numerous negative accounts found on Twitter, this account makes strides to create positive attitudes and, as a result, gains positive responses.

"The account is great because it lets people submit anonymous compliments about other people, and it can really brighten someone's day," Blake Bowser (11) said.

Posting not only the anonymous messages, but also inspirational quotes, the account owner hopes that students gain much more than a tweet shared about them.

"I hope people gain the realization that being positive and nice to one another can just make our school and the world a better place," the Positive Homestead owner said.

Within the first few hours after the account was created, it gained several hundred followers, and in the first week of the account's debut, "@posihomestead" tweets were seen all about Twitter. During the same day this account was created, two other accounts which resembled Positive Homestead were created. One was title "Negative Homestead," designed to be the opposite of the Positive Homestead account. This account, along with another account created entitled Homestead Crushes (featuring submissions of student's crushes), died down after the first few hours of existence.

"I thought it was discouraging to see that after someone made an attempt to create a positive impact on students, someone wanted to make an account to bring others down," Bowser said.

Though the account was popular in its early days, hype has died down a bit. The account still continues to post positive quotes and any submissions via direct message.

"I think it's cool that someone would start an account for people to say positive things about each other to one another," Ethan Snead (11) said. "It makes people's days and spreads the love one tweet at a time."

TWITTER CHITTER

@posihomestead
account allows students to send in compliments or shoutouts.

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PHOTO BY REAGAN MOYSELL

Eager to improve, senior joins reserve team

Savannah Hammond (12) signs with collegiate volleyball for next year at Indiana Tech

Savannah Hammond (12) was recruited to play volleyball on the reserve team for Indiana Tech next fall. Although the senior has no formal experience playing volleyball, she has always been passionate about the sport.

PHOTO BY WILLIAM NGO

Spartana: How are you able to play for Indiana Tech's reserve volleyball team next year?

Hammond: When I was filling out the application for Indiana Tech, I checked the "Volleyball" box under sports you are interested in.

Later, after being accepted and depositing my money, the coach emailed me about my interest in volleyball and asked if I'd like to be a manager. I explained to her that I had never played before aside from doing it for fun. She said that didn't matter, so I accepted.

A few weeks later she informed me that they could no longer pay managers and asked if I would play on the reserve team instead.

Spartana: How did you feel when you were contacted to play for the team?

Hammond: The very first thing I thought was, "They don't know that I have never played." I was thinking it would be over really quick once the coach found that out, but she was extremely nice and encouraged me to play anyway.

Spartana: What led you to officially sign with Indiana Tech?

Hammond: I really like volleyball and played it for fun a lot through the summer last year. The coach made me feel so comfortable and was supportive, so I joined.

Spartana: Are you nervous about playing? Why or why not?

Hammond: Yeah, of course. I've never played. My anxiety will get worse once the time comes to actually play.

Spartana: How tall are you, and how will your height affect your game play?

Hammond: I haven't checked in a while but I believe 5'8"-9"ish. I am hoping I can use it to my advantage.

Spartana: What do you think playing on an athletic team will be like?

Hammond: I have been on the track team the past three years, so I know what being on a team means. In volleyball though, I will really need to listen and pay attention to what my team members are saying and doing on the court.

Spartana: How do you plan to prepare and train before college begins?

Hammond: I have friends and coaches that said they are willing to help me practice and get in shape for this. I am very grateful for that.

Spartana: What are you most excited for about playing volleyball?

Hammond: If I'm being honest, the clothes. I love wearing team shirts. I'm also really excited (and nervous) to see if I turn out to be a good volleyball player. People have asked me quite often if I play volleyball, and I have always answered no. Now I can say yes. That will feel cool.

Spartana: How do you think playing a sport will affect your college experience?

Hammond: Negatively and positively. I'll be out of my comfort zone for sure. First of all, meeting new people is both exciting and nerve wracking for me.

Playing in front of strangers will be even more uncomfortable; I can hardly handle the few people that come watch us throwers in track. Through this though, I hope it will give me more confidence. I also hope I'll be in super good shape!

Spartana: How do you plan to balance sports and academics?

Hammond: I don't really know. I'm bad at managing my time, so I guess I'll just see how everything turns out. I'm grateful for this opportunity. I've wanted to try out for volleyball teams throughout middle school and high school but I was always too scared of failing. Now I'm just jumping into it in college; wish me luck.

--Austen Cummings

Swimmer makes fourth state appearance

By Adam Swiatkowski
Writer

As the girls swimming season came to a close after the girls state championship on Feb. 16, Caroline Weigand's (12) high school swimming career finished with a consistent four year showing at the state.

In her final meet for the team, Weigand finished third in the 100-breaststroke and helped the 200-medley relay to a sixth placed finish with her breaststroke leg.

"(The team) performed well, especially for how young we are, and I was happy with my swim," Weigand said. "The underclassmen (who are) moving up have already stepped up and based on their swims (at state), they will do great in coming years."

The team put in a decent performance, finishing tenth among 42 teams. Weigand's third place, the medley relay team's sixth place and Reagan Cook's (12) eighth place finish in the 200-IM highlighted the girls' day, with six underclassmen contributing to other relay performances.

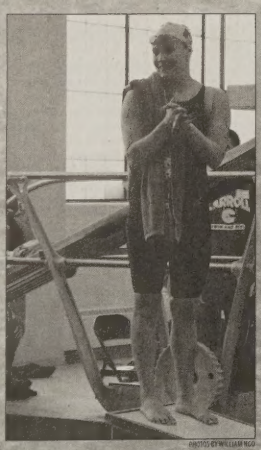


PHOTO BY WILLIAM NGO

"(The team) kept (its) energy up, and the whole weekend at state was a lot of fun," Katie Ducker (10) said. "To keep our swimmers qualifying for state in the future, the underclassmen now plan on building a cohesive team and doing (our) best to motivate and get the girls excited to swim at both meets and practices."

As an underclassmen, Weigand placed fourth in the 100-breaststroke in her first state meet as a freshman along with a thirteenth place in the 200-IM, establishing the two distances as the staple events for her swimming career. Her next year at state resulted in a third place in the breaststroke and a third place in the 200-medley relay. She continued with a successive third place in the breaststroke during her junior year, coupled with a fourth place finish in the 200-medley relay.

"Caroline is a very gifted athlete who had great leadership her freshman year that allowed her to achieve (a third place finish)," Chad Englehart, head coach, said. "Her athleticism has allowed her to sustain that level of performance and she has had a consistent four years for the team."

Weigand's career in the pool will continue on, however, because she signed for Purdue University's swim team in fall 2013. Weigand and her coaches do not expect much of a change when moving up to college, and expect that Weigand will continue to produce successful results while on the Purdue team.

"Any time (an athlete) goes to a college environment, there is a level of expectation and change that (the athlete) has to experience," Englehart said. "I think (Weigand) will have challenges, but she will still have a lot of opportunities to excel."

Weigand's experience at Homestead's swimming program and seeing elite competition yearly at the state championships have given her memories that she will take on to Purdue and will help prepare her for a new chapter in her swimming career.

"It's been a lot of work for the past four years, and I could not have made it without my teammates from all four years," Weigand said. "At Purdue I will be ready for the challenges."

Caroline Weigand (12) receives her third place at the 200-IM sectionals event.

Athletic programs 'motivate everyone to work harder'

Spartans gain additional strengthening and competitive edge by seeking out of school training

By Ian McKenzie
Copy Editor

The competitive advantage is the Holy Grail of sports; athletes train in their sports year-round, choose a specific sport to focus on from young ages and go to trendy athletic organizations with dedicated training staffs, all to attain that ever-sought-after edge.

A growing number of Spartan athletes train at Spiece Fitness and Athletes With Purpose (AWP) with that goal in mind.

Aaron Baker, sport performance coach at Spiece Fitness, cites the training staff's focus on teaching technique and working in smaller groups as the prime reason they are attractive to local high school athletes.

"What we like to do is work in smaller groups, so we have a little more individual attention for our athletes," Baker said. "We are technique-based; we make sure everybody has the proper form before we send them out, so we aren't going to put a bunch of weight on somebody and tell them to squat it if they don't know how to do it correctly."

At AWP, where student-athletes Alex Kunce (12) and Sarah Galovich (11) go to train, the training team follows some of the same ideologies.

"Training is in groups with multiple trainers," Kunce said. "They are structured with roughly four five-minute field workouts and four five-minute weight room workouts."

As far as time commitment goes, it varies depending on season.

"(At Spiece,) it depends on what season (the athletes are) in," Baker said. "If they're kids in an offseason, we'll get them four or five days; if they're in season maybe once or none."

That same flexibility is seen within the AWP practice schedule as well.

"I go to AWP at least three days a week, and a session normally lasts for an hour and a half," Galovich said.

Kunce, not currently on a school sport team, finds even more time to attend the workouts.

"I go six times a week and the training sessions are 90 minutes long, but you don't have to stay that long since the training session is broken into two parts," Kunce said.

What sets AWP apart for the student-athletes is the way the fellow athletes push each other as competitors.

"AWP is filled with other committed athletes, so it helps to motivate everyone to work harder," Kunce said. "People from nearly all high-school sports train there so there is great diversity in sports and athletes."

Galovich, a school softball player, echoes Kunce, adding that the training process compares favorably to team training sessions.

"AWP provides a great kind of competitive advantage over just team workouts because of the atmosphere," Galovich said. "Everyone there wants to succeed just as badly as the next guy so everyone pushes themselves to the max(...) At a team practice someone may not get that type of intensity and atmosphere; I know I don't at softball practices."

It's clear that other area athletes are catching onto the trend as well; Spiece gets around 40 athletes a day, with five or six of them being Spartans.

With that size of numbers comes diversity in goals, but the staff works hard to meet each athlete's needs.

"A lot of (the athletes) that we have would like (a college coach) to find them so that they can play at the next level," Baker said. "But a lot of them also just want to get better at the sport that they're in. So if we can help them out with that, then we are doing our job."

PHOTO BY WILLIAM NGO

Alex Kunce (12) kicks a soccer ball into the air. On top of the time he practiced with the school soccer team, Kunce joined Athletes With Purpose (AWP) to train. AWP offers an environment filled with diverse sports and athletes, according to Kunce.

Despite their hesitant attitudes, new gym members surprised by unexpected results

Before Jan. 11, I spent an embarrassing amount of time watching Netflix, scrolling through Twitter and taking naps. After Jan. 11, I still continue to do that. However, in the meantime, I managed to see through one of the most sought after, cliché New Years' resolutions: joining a gym.

I can already see your eye rolls and hear your scoffs. Flashbacks of freshman year gym class flooded my mind, too. I remembered the miles I was forced to run and the humiliation that consumed me after being one of the last to cross the finish line. I recalled the weight room days and being winded after lifting a mere twenty five pounds.

The idea of joining a gym was almost soiled by my undesirable memories of gym class. I never understood the aspect of grading someone on his or her mile time or being forced to participate in sports that I failed miserably in.

HAIDEN'S HIGHLIGHTS

To me, it practically defeated the purpose of working out which is to increase self-worth, not leave a bitter feeling at the end of the period. After reliving these recollections, I was extremely uneasy.

BY HAIDEN STEINGASS
Sports Editor

The thought of carving out time for such an unmanageable activity seems like too much to bear if it means giving up an hour of television or time with friends every couple of days.

Nonetheless, the New Year has a tendency to make people feel invincible. I allowed the impulsivity that most teenagers possess when making stupid decisions to lead me into a making a rash choice. Only this time, my choice would lead to something good and empowering.

> "The thought of carving out time for such an unmanagable activity seems like too much to bear if it means giving up an hour of television or time with friends every couple of days."
>
> **HAIDEN STEINGASS**

After shamelessly signing up for Planet Fitness, online I must add, I mentally prepared myself to go out into the world of athletes and body builders.

To my surprise, as I entered the gym, everyone looked strangely normal. No one was incredibly fit, no one was noticeably arrogant and best of all, no one was looking at me. There were moms, dads, grandparents and teenagers.

Everyone's purpose was the same as mine—to better themselves. No one cared what I looked like, how little endurance I had at first or how many times I had to look at the instruction guides on the side of the equipment.

I'm shy by nature, and I dread going out of my comfort zone, but after a few trips to Planet Fitness, I could not care less about the distractions or fellow gym goers around me.

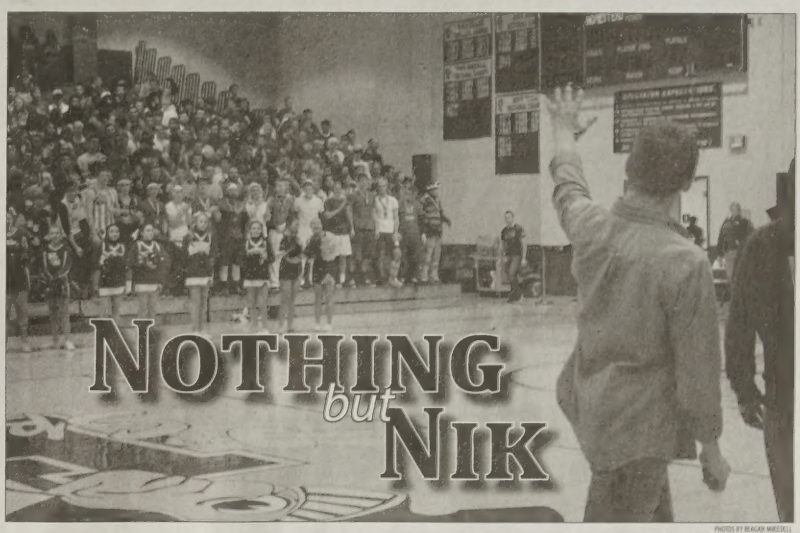
The atmosphere was comfortable beyond my highest expectations, and I feel as if I have redeemed myself from the adverse gym class memories.

Being able to self-motivate rather than being forced to run a mile for a grade that affects my GPA has been surprisingly stress-free and liberating.

For me, working out does not necessarily centralize around a certain body figure or weight. It has become more about finding a constant in life during an age where most things are subject to change. It brings purpose to the free time the majority of us are uncertain how to fill. It boosts self-confidence; gives us goals and has lasting impressions.

More importantly, joining a gym gives you the freedom and flexibility to start from nowhere. There is no athletic background needed and no prerequisite talents entailed. Just a moment of pure motivation is enough to kick start the journey, and the rest is up to you.

Follow @TheSpartana for live coverage of all sporting events.



PHOTOS BY BEAGAN MIKESELL

Halftime event celebrates student's recovery from spinal trauma

BY ETHAN YDE
Sports Writer

While students typically frequent basketball games for socialization and entertainment, the boys home game against Norwell on Feb. 13 had a more meaningful cause. Nik Gogos (10) was recently injured in a wrestling accident, and the school put together a benefit during the game to support him.

"I got a standing ovation before the game where I was recognized for what had happened," Gogos said. "I am so thankful for everyone who has been there, prayed and helped me get through this."

In addition to his family and his presence on the court before the game, many of the senior boys and administrators wrote "Gogos Strong" on their shirts and wore them in honor of the event; however, these shirts were not the only ones that depicted these words. The cheerleaders also tossed professionally made "Gogos Strong" shirts to the audience.

"The purpose of honoring Nik at the game was to recognize how far he has progressed in such a short amount of time, as well as recognize the family, students and community for encouraging him on his way to recovery," Gaby Meissner (10) said. "The game overall was a fun night with the Olympic theme, and I was glad to honor one of our own Spartans."

Because the injury was a very expensive situation for the family, the team held a mini-game at halftime in which anyone from the audience was allowed to pay a dollar to attempt to throw the ball and make a basket. Because all of the proceeds went to the Gogos family, this generous event would be able to assist them with their medical bills and help to buy Nik a guitar. While he is out of the hospital for the most part, Gogos still attends physical therapy to get back to how he was before the injury.

"I've been doing pretty well lately, but I still cannot lift my right arm," Gogos said. "The support has been a great help; it serves as my drive and keeps me going. It really shows that life is short and anything can happen."

Although his injury prematurely ended his wrestling season, Gogos is not letting the wall keep him from getting better and stronger. All of the support he gets from his teammates, friends and family keeps him going through tough times. This event was just one way of supporting Gogos. The game, which turned out to be a victory for the varsity team, ended up to be a success for not just the athletic program, but for Gogos and everyone who has supported him.

"Nik is a hero of mine and continues to impress me every time I talk to him," Nick VanBurk (12) said. "No one truly understands the struggle he had to go through and continues to go through every day. I never thought that as a senior, I would look up to a freshman."

HIGHWAY TO HEAL

Nov. 23: Gogos is injured in a wrestling match at Warsaw Community High School. On the same day, surgery is performed to replace Gogos' C4 vertebrae and ruptured disk.

Dec. 20: Following a 27 day stint in rehab, Gogos returns home for the first time.

Feb. 13: Gogos, along with his family, is acknowledged at the basketball game for their strength in overcoming the injury which affected the daily lives of them all.

Nik Gogos and his family are applauded by the crowd during the recognition of his health and return to school at the boys basketball game at home against Norwell Feb. 13.

Boys basketball motivated to win

After New Haven defeat, team plans, prepares for postseason competition

BY TESSA LUTZ
Social Media Manager

The boys basketball team holds a current record of 14:5 as they head into sectionals, beginning March. 4. One of the five losses was to New Haven by a mere point in the fourth quarter, a game that gained much attention after the unexpected defeat.

"(I'm) disappointed we lost, but we can learn from it," Tahj Curry (10), said. "It was a close game, so we know we can beat one of the top teams in the city, and that gives us confidence throughout the tournament."

Though the New Haven game resulted in defeat, the team was confident they put forth the necessary amount of practice and determination to come out with a victory.

"We prepared all week to put ourselves in the best possible situation to win," Joe Ault (12) said.

The team has played numerous challenging games but still has three remaining in the regular season: Snider, Northrop and Northside. The boys have high expectations for the end of their season heading into sectionals.

"As a team, we want to win these last three games and go into the sectional tournament hot," Curry said.

The teams they will face in the tournament are Wayne, South Side, Jay County and Huntington North. The Spartans have been victorious over South Side in the regular season, but playing Wayne and Huntington North did not result in the success they were hoping for. The boys are anticipating a difficult sectional tournament ahead but believe they have what it takes to come out on top.

"I feel good about going into sectionals; we have the talent to compete with anyone," Lucas Tapp (11), said.

Although the team is heading to sectionals with a great amount of confidence, the players have changed their game plan to help them prepare for the challenges that lie ahead.

"We are more focused in practice," Tapp said. "We are going to face some good teams, but I think we will be ready. We are going to work together to get the 'W'."

With a majority of victories on its side, the team is expecting to remain determined and thrive in the coming weeks in order to be at its peak by the time it reaches sectionals. The boys believe that they will be successful in working as a team to accomplish their goals.

"We help each other at practice; like when someone is doing something wrong, we tell them what they are doing, and we don't get mad at each other," Curry said, "We are all pretty close."

The boys not only have the support of each other, but the support of the student body as they head into the tournament.

"As a team I think they're a really strong group," Khamsay Panngasiri (12), active student section participant said. "They play and support each other like a family. The student section is really fun, and we will keep cheering no matter what."

Caleb Swanigan (10) drives past a defender to the basket in the Dec. 27 basketball game against Marion. The Spartans were defeated by the Giants 76 to 68. Swanigan scored a total of 22 points individually.

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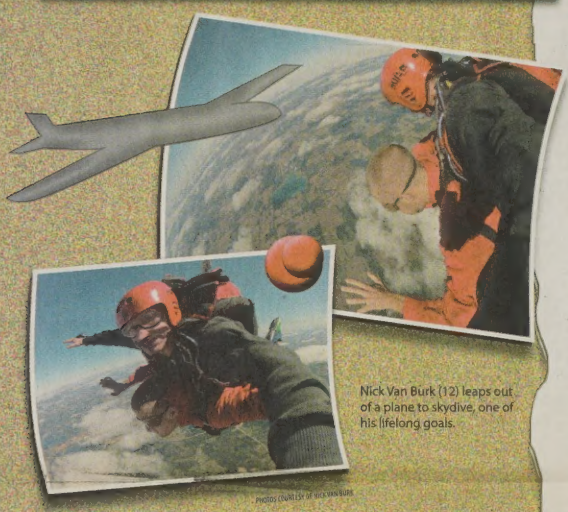
INDIANA TECH

My Wish At My Command

By Allie Nelson
Executive Editor

Realistic goals and faraway dreams coincide when effortlessly envisioned or jotted down on a piece of paper. A bucket list is nowhere near ordinary. It is an optimistic map for the future, a hope behind the idea "anything is possible if you put your mind to it." The list is where once-in-a-lifetimes begin.



Photos courtesy of Nick Van Burk

Nick Van Burk (12) leaps out of a plane to skydive, one of his lifelong goals.

Daring Dreamers

Pursuers of thrill are attracted to the exhilaration experienced by jumping into the unknown. These diverse acts of courage are equally electrifying and intimidating, completed to eliminate the regret following a missed opportunity.

Nick Van Burk (12) has already accomplished three of his lifelong goals. From swimming with sharks in the Bahamas to climbing a rocky precipice of Wyoming, his list was launched with endeavors most intense.

"(For shark diving) they take you out to this spot where (the sharks) are just hanging around," Van Burk said. "There's like forty of them because they know the company comes back and we sit in a circle around this guy who brings this food down there and they were brushing up against your face. The only scary part was when we were in the boat - my dad and I did this together - and we're sitting there putting our (gear on) and you just see these (shark) fins in the water."

Beyond these adventures, sky diving is a common activity while on the quest for gripping adventure. Van Burk recently jumped from an airplane midflight in celebration of his eighteenth birthday.

"(Sky diving) was pretty awesome," Van Burk said. "It was a smaller company though so some of the things were pretty sketchy like (...) the pilot was wearing a parachute."

Spanish teacher Señor Peeper, inspired by a class of seniors hopeful to go in a group after graduation, similarly fulfilled the goal to sky dive.

"When the door opened and they started jumping out, I was pretty scared," Peeper said. "It was hard to let go. The guy said 'okay we're going to let go on the count of three' (...) and my hands didn't move so he had to help me get out. It was pretty fun after that moment, but the first five or six seconds was (spent) sitting there, looking down thinking, 'What am I doing? Why did I decide to do this?'"

With the nervousness comes extreme delight. Not only are the adrenaline-fueled stunts exciting, but they motivate those who participate to take chances and rely on their strength.

"(Sky diving) was definitely worth it," Peeper said. "It was another way of letting go of your fears and putting your trust in someone else. You are attached to an instructor and your life is in their hands."

Going Global

Repeating an opportunity fulfilled, Victoria Cervoni (11) recognized her family's tradition to travel abroad as her chance to undertake her bucket list driven by exploration. Embarking upon her trip to Europe, which included stops in France, Italy and Greece, Cervoni knew the voyage was her opportunity to begin experiencing the cultural tours which motivated her passion for travel.

"I went with a program (called) People to People Student Ambassadors," Cervoni said. "It's kind of an educational program, but a lot of students who travel want to connect with other students. It sets a foundation for our generation to have better relations with other countries."

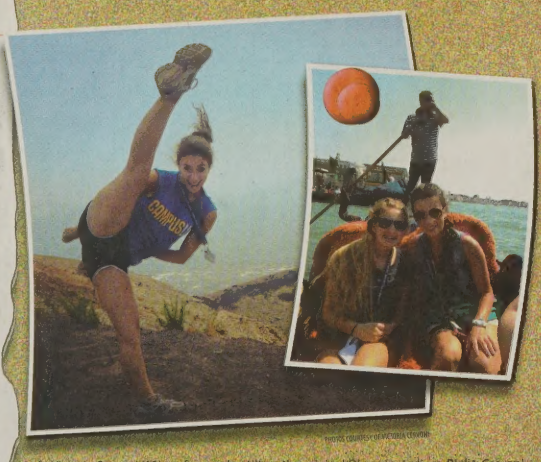
For Cervoni, the journey was not simply another checkmark in a directory of destinations. Her Italian roots and appreciation of the life which engulfed her for two weeks intensified the impact of the trip.

"The places we went surpassed my expectations," Cervoni said. "The culture of (Venice) was so beautiful, the way they talked, the way (the city) looked. It was like being in a little fairy tale. Greece (had) the bluest water I've ever seen. Everything in person is so much more amazing than you expect it to be. It's surreal."

> "I think that if you want to achieve anything on your bucket list you can. If you don't, you're just wasting your life."
>
> **VICTORIA CERVONI (11)**
> *Goal Setter*

Without enthusiasm and planning, the trip would have been impossible.

"I think that if you want to achieve anything on your bucket list you can," Cervoni said. "If you don't, you're just wasting your life. (Travelling) gave me a different perspective. It makes everything more interesting."



Photos courtesy of Victoria Cervoni

Left: Victoria Cervoni (12) performs a leg tilt on the original Olympic stadium. Right: Cervoni and a friend sit on a gondola.

Harmonious Hopes

Lifetime hopes, however, do not always require the crossing of oceans or national borders. For music lovers with visions closer to home, a marathon of concerts is a dream come true. Lexey Denning (12) viewed Lollapalooza, Chicago's annual festival in early August, as a summer highlight and a step closer to fulfilling her wishes.

"It's actually on my bucket list to go to every music festival," Denning said. "They're just the things I want to do before I kick it."

Opposed to performances featuring a single band, a celebration of over a hundred groups is paradise for melodic enthusiasts.

"You get to see a lot of music and live talent," Denning said. "I think it's awesome when a band sounds better live than on the record."

The main attraction, however, was not the only redeeming aspect of the three-day event.

"I went with my best friend and one of the greatest parts was being able to experience it with her," Denning said. "I think it helped me appreciate different types of people. Events like (Lollapalooza) attract a more electric crowd. The people in the audience you don't know and will probably never see again, but you form a connection with them over the music."

Photo by Lexey Denning

Sydney Isroff (12) and Lexey Denning (12) stand in the second row at the 2013 Lollapalooza Music Festival.

Bucket lists transform far-off ideas into responsibilities. Without them, there would be less incentive than the little which exists today. The unordinary brainstorming exercise can make a life worth living.

"When opportunities come your way and it's something you want to do and it's something that you're prepared to do, you should take advantage of it when you have the chance," Peeper said. "I don't think you can ever take tomorrow for granted."

the SPARTANA

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57 students participate in annual blood drive

By Ethan Zweig
Writer

On Monday, March 10, a blood drive was held in room 900 by student government and the Red Cross. Qualifying students were able to donate blood as an effort to help those who need it.

"It's a great tradition for Homestead," Alyssa Heggen, guidance counselor, said. "There's usually one to two blood drives every year at Homestead. This year, we've only hosted one, and we wanted to make it pretty big and special."

Like other years, the student government plays a big role in setting up the event.

"It's just been a tradition that student government has always done it, and it's for a good cause," Heggen, who is also a student government co-sponsor, said. "One of the things that student government does to develop leadership skills and gain community within the school is to provide these kind of events that are beneficial for not only Homestead, but for the entire community."

The process of donating blood is an exciting experience, but has many requirements beforehand, such as an age requirement of 16, parent permission for those who aren't yet 17, and not having left the country recently.

"My job is to make sure everyone has parent permission and their registration," Nkiruka Eseakudo (10) said. "I have to inform them on what giving blood means, and give them food after they've donated."

▶ SEE 'BLOOD DRIVE,' PAGE 2

PHOTO BY WILLIAM NGO

Sanjana Sai (11) stares down at her needle-clad arm while donating blood.

PHOTOS BY REAGAN MIKESELL

Players and fans storm the court in celebration immediately after the boys basketball team won their first regional title in the school's history.

HOOP'D on a FEELIN'

Boys basketball team finishes year with record-breaking season

By Haiden Steingass
Sports Editor

The boys varsity basketball team ended its season on March 22 at the semi state game against Lake Central at Lafayette Jefferson. Despite the loss, this year's team made school history as it was victorious in both regional games. The athletes defeated both the Kokomo Wildkats and the Hamilton Southeastern Royals in the two-game tournament at Marion.

"Regionals was very exciting," Tahj Curry (10) said. "The highlight of (the tournament) was the atmosphere. It was great and very fun to play in one of the best gyms in the state. The strong point for the team was our defense. We are playing our best basketball right now."

The scores of the regional games were 68-60 (Kokomo), 59-57 (HSE) and 59-72 (Lake Central).

"Both (regional) teams really (only) had one person their whole offense went through, so we were focusing on taking them out of the game and making the other players beat us," Ryan Cotter (12) said. "(Our) coach prepared us just like he would for any other game. That's how we had to treat it. Just take care of business."

In anticipation of a challenging match up, the team's defensive members excelled throughout all three games. Ben Skowronek (10) continued to take on a pivotal role for the team and aided upperclassmen as he made strong plays on both offense and defense.

"Of course Biggie (had) a major impact (during the games). But I also think Joe (Ault), (Skowronek) and Dana (Batt) (11) had a good impact stepping up when (the other team was) doubling on Biggie," Cotter said.

This season, the team has been prospering from the skill level of not only the starters,

▶ SEE 'BASKETBALL,' PAGE 2

Immigrants protest Venezuelan oppression

Caterina (12), Carina (9) and Camila (9) Valentini react to the current crisis in their native country

By Megan Cater
Copy Editor

Outside the boundaries of Fort Wayne and even the United States, students strive to make a difference and make their voices heard. Caterina Valentini (12) participated in a protest in Indianapolis on Feb. 22 to support her home country of Venezuela.

"I went to Indianapolis because they were calling for other Venezuelans to attend these protests to show their support towards the current situation that is happening in Venezuela," Valentini said. "My family and I made some placards and we protested the whole day."

> "There is a lot of inflation, the economic situation is horrible. People are just saying 'This is enough.'"
>
> **CATERINA VALENTINI (12)**
> *Protester*

Venezuela is currently in turmoil due to conflicts between government officials and citizens. Major social and economic issues have arisen and protesters are demanding better security, an end to goods shortages, and protection of their freedom of speech, according to cnn.com. Some have blamed Venezuelan president Nicolas Madura for these problems.

"In Venezuela they are protesting because there is a lot of insecurity," Valentini said. "There is a lot of inflation, the economic situation is horrible. People are just saying, 'This is enough.'"

The protests that are being held in Venezuela have become violent.

"Since the protests have started in Caracas, over 18 people have been killed," Joel Brenneman (12), current events enthusiast, said. "Because of the violence there, some people have been saying that the government forces have

▶ SEE 'PROTEST,' PAGE 2

PHOTO BY WILLIAM NGO

Carina (9), Caterina (12) and Camila (9) Valentini hold signs over their mouths to represent the Venezuelan people who have been silenced.

BRIEFS

FW ALMOST FAMOUS
Fort Wayne's Almost Famous, hosted by the Mayor's Youth Engagement Council, is looking for talented high school musicians and bands to perform May 31 at the Wells Street Bridge. Audition videos must be sent to riverpalooza2014@gmail.com by April 15.

WINTER GUARD
Congratulations to the winter guard for placing third at the IHSCGA State Finals on March 22. This marks the second year in a row winter guard has taken third place at state.

PLTW BIOMEDICAL SHOWCASE
Project Lead the Way biomedical classes will be holding a student showcase night in order to honor fourth year students and display work from the various PLTW biomedical classes. The event will be held at 6 p.m. on April 21 in the Community Room. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to attend.

IMMUNIZATIONS
Incoming seniors will be required to receive 2 meningitis vaccinations beginning in the 2014-15 school year.

Merit Scholars advance, four recognized as senior Finalists

By Tessa Virgilio
Writer

They penciled the applications, endured the standardized tests and attained exceptional scores. Now they await the Merit Scholar title. Four seniors have advanced to the finalist category in the 59th annual National Merit Scholarship program, making them a select four out of 15,000 students nationwide.

This past February, Marielle Cabe, Natalie Hawken, Benjamin Landrigan and Erik Overdahl were notified of their selection as National Merit Finalists.

"In order to become a finalist, we had to submit (another) application," Marielle Cabe (12) said. "I think that was a couple essays and then just a regular application- your GPA, SAT scores- just to ensure you're up to academic par."

Prior to becoming a finalist, the four academically talented students had to obtain the semifinalist title through distinguishable Practice SAT (PSAT) scores.

"Their PSAT score that they (acquire) as a junior is what initially gets them recognized as a semifinalist," Amy Hamilton, guidance counselor, said. "I think the biggest thing we need to do is remind students as a junior when

▶ SEE 'NATIONAL MERIT,' PAGE 2

▶15000
high school students selected as national merit finalists

▶BASKETBALL CONTINUED FROM 1

but every team member. With a strong underclassmen base, the team was able to thrive even when its leading players were not in the game.

"Something that really has been impressive to see this season is how well the guys have bonded together and how well they can read each other," Kate Quick (12), cheerleader, said. "Also, it's amazing to see how they can switch some of the non-starters in and out and still play just as aggressively.

After winning the first regional game against Kokomo, the team was uncertain if it would play against North Side or Hamilton Southeastern in the championship game, so the athletes were unable to prepare in advance. However, their ongoing success sustained once again despite their initial uncertainties.

"It was a great experience. I was down there with a team a couple years ago." Cotter said. "The atmosphere is great. The competition is great. The best (feeling) is during the game since it's so close. Every big play sparks so much excitement."

After defeating all odds and making school history, the team traveled to Lafayette Jefferson last weekend. The semistate game resulted in a high stress, intense competition; the Spartans fell behind the Indians throughout both halves, though they were able to come close multiple times.

To aid the team, a pep session took place on Friday and the celebrated student section took four buses to the game to show its enduring support for the athletes and the first time experience.

"The student section really just adds an incredibly electric atmosphere," Quick said. "It's so much more fun to do cheers with hundreds of HHS students right behind us. The more people, the better."

With an intense round of postseason games under the team's belt and a school record broken, next year's returning members will have the means to go even farther.

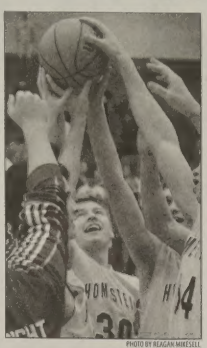

PHOTO BY REAGAN MIKESELL

The boys basketball team holds a ball in huddle before regionals.

10-10 rule increases student attendance

By Katie Dunlap
News Editor

The beginning of the 2013-14 school year marked the start of several new attendance policies, including the 10-10 rule, tardy sweeps, third tardy meetings with the discipline office and the restriction of students to 10 total parent excused days. The policy has been successful in decreasing the number of students with In-School Suspensions (ISS). "The biggest change we have seen in the discipline office is the decrease in the number of ISS given for attendance related issues," Scott Zvers, dean of students, said. "There has been a significant drop."

Prior to this year, students could have 10 parent excuses per class period. The shift to 10 parent excused days total was implemented to ensure students are present at school.

"The overarching goal was to increase student time in the classroom, whether that be students getting to class on time, staying in class without leaving during the period, or by avoiding time spent in ISS," Zvers said. "All data points to that being a rousing success compared to last year's numbers at this point in the year."

The attendance policy has increased the workload for the attendance and discipline offices because of the new third tardy meeting. After a student receives his or her third tardy, the discipline office meets with the student. If the student receives five tardies, they must attend a one-hour detention. The meeting after three tardies is meant to warn the students they are getting close to five.

"I would say there has been an increase in the workload for both offices because we are seeing more students, especially to have conversations after the third tardy," Zvers said.

The policy is succeeding in keeping students in the classroom, as they do not want to waste any of their parent excused days. If a student is sick and he or she obtain's a doctor's note, parent excused days are not used.

"Before, if I was sick, I wouldn't come to school, but now I feel like I have to because I only have 10 days," Alyssa Corns (12), said.

Teachers note the initial success of the policy, but believe as the year goes on, students are present in the classroom less.

"At first, attendance improved drastically. Now, (near the end of the year), we are back to horrible attendance," Marjorie Gamble, math teacher, said.

While there will be no drastic changes in the attendance policy for the 2014-15 school year, the administration will continue to adapt the many facets of the policy to be as clear as possible.

"We are always looking at ways to help students be successful so I anticipate there being some tweaks to the attendance policy (for next school year)," Zvers said.

eLearning replaces snow day

SACS among first in Indiana to launch online make-up curriculum

By Aparna Chintapalli
Writer

Over the past few months, the Southwest Allen County School Board members have discussed various ways for students to make up the accumulative loss of classroom time due to the harsh winter this year. After settling upon the concept of eLearning and having it approved by Glenda Ritz, the Superintendent of Public Instruction for Indiana, the SACS School Board implemented eLearning throughout the district. Since then, students of Southwest Allen County schools have undergone sweeping changes, especially at the high school level.

With the recent implementation of the eLearning curriculum, high school students have received online work from their teachers that will be used to make up the lost classroom time. Additionally, SACS district students were able to experience eLearning at its finest: at home, without the pangs and toils of going to school. On March 12, students throughout the district participated in the unprecedented eLearning snow day; this marked the first time that any Indiana school district participated in an eLearning-based school day to immediately compensate for habitual classroom time in spite of hazardous weather.

During this eLearning day, students received assignments from all of their teachers by 9:00 a.m., primarily through MyBigCampus. Students were expected to complete their assignments and be prepared for the next school day; in some cases, students were required to submit their assignments on that day through online sources. Essentially, the traditional classroom time was redesigned to fit a virtual standard of learning.

"Considering it was the first time, I think the eLearning snow day was successful," Meg Underwood, French teacher, said. "I was happy with my classes and my students' overall ability to complete their assignments. Moreover, it was fun to work in my pajamas and not make up school in June!"

Despite the fact that students are now not required to make up another school day due to eLearning, there were several flaws to this form of virtual teaching. Many students found that teachers posted information inconsistently on MyBigCampus, making it difficult to pinpoint assignments and complete them at the right time.

> "Considering it was the first time, I think the eLearning snow day was successful. I was happy with my classes and my students' overall ability to complete their assignments."
>
> **MEG UNDERWOOD**
> *French teacher*

"It was problematic as I tried to find all the materials we needed for the assignment because some worksheets were posted on the calendar, others under resources, and others under schoolwork," Maria Rife (11) said. "It would be nice if it was all in the same place or the teachers posted an announcement saying where we could find everything we need."

Moreover, other students pointed out that they spent almost the entire day working on their assignments, claiming that teachers posted an irrelevant amount of work – even more work than is done on a traditional school day.

"eLearning was extremely frustrating. I ended up spending six hours on the computer trying to finish homework I wouldn't have had in some classes if there was school that day," Shannon Nycum (12), said. "Also, I wasn't able to fully understand the material, and learning is the point to all of this work. There wasn't any teaching going on, only 'fill this out' or 'write this essay' about completely new concepts."

Though there were many flaws to this test run of eLearning, many people throughout the district still regard this system as a step towards opening up a wide scope of greater learning opportunities for students in the future.

"Students seemed like they were stressed about some classes during the eLearning snow day, especially since they had eLearning snow day work and eLearning two week assignments at the same time on top of other projects and homework," Underwood said. "But I think it will get better. My students were able to give constructive feedback, and something I think students should be doing is logging their time and communicating with their teachers on how long assignments took so we can help our students work more efficiently and modify our assignments for the next time. And as Mr. Ginder said, 'if we are 1:1 we should be using our technology.'"

▶PROTEST CONTINUED FROM 1

been using excessive force against the protesters and many people are afraid that the violence could escalate into a full scale civil war," Brenneman said.

The conflicts have not yet been settled between the two parties. With the country being divided between those who support Madura and those who oppose him, nothing is being resolved.

"We want the government of Venezuela to do something about it because this has to stop," Valentini said. "We want them to stop the violence towards the students, towards the people over there. We want international actions to be taken. We need a lot of support."

Protests have the potential to make a substantial impact on an important issue, if they are led correctly and persistently.

"As a government teacher, I think that your first amendment right of peaceful assembly is vitally important in order to show your opinion on certain topics," Shawn Harkness said.

Whether or not the protests are effectively impacting the cause is hard to say.

"Right now with everything that's going on in Russia and Ukraine, people aren't focusing on what's going on in Venezuela," Brenneman said. "I think if all of (this) wasn't going on, there would be more attention to (Venezuela). I think in the long run if (protesters) are at least successful in getting some of their demands it will go a long way to helping the stability of Venezuela."

Protests are good opportunities to voice opinions. Valentini and other Venezuelans are trying to make their voices heard while supporting their home country.

"Venezuela is a small country," Valentini said. "Almost no one over here knows a lot about this. If we want to make a change, we need support from everyone. I will keep protesting. My Facebook page and Twitter is (*sic*) full of videos and stuff if people want to see they can follow me. Venezuela is in my heart so I will keep this until the end."

▶18

Venezuelans left dead from protests in Caracas, Venezuela.

USATODAY.COM

▶NATIONAL MERIT CONTINUED FROM 1

they are taking the PSAT that it counts for so much more than just a practice SAT. There's the scholarship money attached with that."

All four seniors hope to progress further in the competition to secure a respectable scholarship. The finalists are now contenders for some 8,300 Merit Scholarships, worth $35 million in total. Given there are 15,000 finalists, more than half of them will win a National Merit Scholarship, earning the Merit Scholar title. There are three types of Merit Scholarship awards: National Merit $2,500 Scholarships, Corporate-sponsored Merit Scholarships and College- sponsored Scholarships.

"I think the qualifying score on the PSAT was a 215 (out of 240)," Benjamin Landrigan (12) said. "To (become a semifinalist), we filled out another application, and then now we just wait to find out if we have (won a scholarship). There wasn't a difference (between becoming a Finalist and a Semifinalist), really."

For one of the scholarship opportunities, finalists report a sponsor college as their "first choice" to the National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC). "Officials of each sponsor college select winners of their awards from Finalists who have been accepted for admission and have informed NMSC by the published deadlines that the sponsor college or university is their first choice.

These awards are renewable for up to four years of undergraduate study," according to the NMSC web site.

"Right now, it's just waiting to see if we have actually gotten into the scholar level," Cabe said. "If we do get there, our first choice of college will award us scholarships."

The $2,500 National Merit Scholarship opportunity for finalists is appreciated, but the students are concentrated on being pulled out of the haystack by their college of choice for a renewable scholarship, and some colleges will even offer a full ride.

"What is important about being named a National Merit semifinalist and subsequently a finalist is the interest from colleges who then will entice students to come there with packages of financial aid," Hamilton said. "That's really the best thing about the National Merit Corporation Scholarship."

While a scholarship would ease a portion of the financial struggle demanded by college life, it will not actually affect the course of any of the finalists' college plans.

"I'm really hoping that I get (to the Scholar level) because I really need the scholarships," Cabe said. "It's actually just been great to be a part of the National Merit community."

▶BLOOD DRIVE CONTINUED FROM 1

Although this is the only planned blood drive for this school year, students still look forward to doing their role.

"I've heard of all of the people who have been saved by the donations of blood, so I decided that if I could make a difference by doing something like that, I would definitely try it," Hallie Nowak (10) said. "(I knew I'd have to) mentally prepare myself because I actually cannot stand the sight or idea of blood."

The process of donating blood took a long time, sometimes up to two hours.

"There was a brief (and confidential) medical meeting, and then they drew the blood," Nowak said. "The entire process took (some time,) like an hour. I was a little anxious and felt nauseous (...) but nothing too substantial."

There was only one blood drive this year, but student government has plans to host more each year in the future.

"Because of all the winter weather that's hit the Midwest, there has actually been a decrease in the number of blood drives that have been hosted through the Red Cross," Heggen said. "So that means that there is a shortage of blood, and so since we have only had one we wanted to make it big and hopefully fill that gap that the Red Cross is experiencing. (They're) going to be coming in, setting up their own equipment. They're going to be doing all of it."

Altogether, the blood drive was successful. 57 students donated, and 114 lives have been potentially saved with the blood collected.

"I felt a little lightheaded, but we got to eat and drink snacks afterwards, which was definitely a plus," Nowak said. "I also felt good that I might be saving someone's life with my blood."

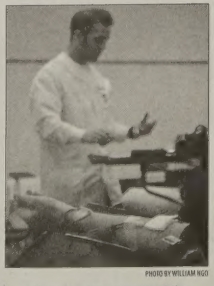

PHOTO BY WILLIAM NGO

A donor waits patiently while giving blood at the blood drive.

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Staff members support the First Amendment in its entirety and oppose censorship in any form. The content of the paper is determined by the student staff. In cases of potentially controversial material, the Editorial Board will meet to decide the content of the newspaper. The staff will be assisted by the adviser in areas of professional ethics and legalities.

Material that is libelous or obscene as defined by Fort Wayne Newspapers or could cause a substantial and material disruption of the school day as defined by the Supreme Court will not be printed.

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PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY ALLIE NELSON

Unsupervised spring break trips not appropriate

BY KYLIE POLING
Opinion Editor

Is it safe to allow teens to go on spring break unsupervised? Once originally a college ritual, several teens now dream of flocking to some sunny, congested beach filled with other spring breakers, and more often than not, they imagine this without parents in the picture. Excited for a week with no school and no parents, spring break can translate to "No Rules" if parents do not take the right steps allowing their teen to go on spring break unsupervised.

Spring break is notorious for wild parties, consumption of alcohol, illegal drug use and overall risky behavior. Even the most level-headed kid can be pulled into carrying out risky activities by peer-pressure when exposed to this taste of unrestricted freedom. Unfortunately, the combination of new-found freedom and dicey activities can be disastrous. Around 2,500 American teens are arrested each year while on spring break, according to the United States Department of State Bureau of Consular Affairs. An arrest can be devastating for a teen, especially for one that would not have typically gotten him or herself into trouble. While unsupervised teen spring breakers are introduced to a profound freedom, they can also be introduced to more crime or illegal activities, such as underage drinking and drug use.

If parents are okay with allowing their child to go on spring break without them and financing that trip, they need to discuss with their teen the dangers of going on spring break alone, no matter how uncomfortable the discussion may be. Discussing their concerns and making their expectations clear is the best way parents can instill responsibility in their child to avoid using drugs and alcohol, and to avoid any other type of trouble.

Spring break can become a booze fest for teenagers if parents choose not to have the discussion with their teens about the risks of an unsupervised vacation. One story of a teen spring breaker drinking mishap that might come to mind is 17-year-old Matt James, who fell to his death from a balcony in Panama City in 2010 after drinking too much, only a couple weeks after he had earned a football scholarship to Notre Dame. During the same year of his death, the Panama City police arrested nearly 1,000 teenagers for underage drinking in only 17 days.

Alcohol is abundant on spring break, and it is the source of most trouble for unsupervised teens. Consumption of alcohol, especially the over-consumption which often exists on spring break, can cause teens to do things they would not have normally done if not drinking, nor if their parents were present. Parents really need to warn their kids about the dangers of underage drinking, which can seem unavoidable at some beach locations.

"(Parents) need to discuss with their teen the dangers of going on spring break alone."

KYLIE POLING

If a parent is sure they do not want their child on some beach vacation unsupervised, there are safer alternatives in order to avoid having a sulky teen complaining for a week while at home. Family vacations are always an option, but those who are set on going to the beach without parents might not want to cooperate with those plans. Another alternative is to be part of humanitarian mission over the break. In Atlanta, high schools set up programs in which teens can spend the vacation doing everything from working in Haitian orphanages, to helping stray dogs in Appalachia. These options allow kids to still have that taste of freedom, but doing something good while learning responsibility without parent supervision.

Deciding if it is safe or not for a child to go on spring break alone is ultimately up to the parent, but when safety is jeopardized, it might be a better idea to avoid a wild spring break extravaganza.

Gender separation unnecessary

Girls-only engineering class creates barriers, limits growth in career field

BY KATIE MAHER
Writer

The modern world has seen a dramatic rise in the prominence of feminism this year, from the release of Disney's film "Frozen" to the Ban Bossy movement endorsed by celebrities, "Lean-In" and the Girl Scouts. Administration has taken the progression into feminism into its own hands through the creation of an engineering class specifically for girls, in addition to the traditional co-ed class.

The main contender of skepticism for the addition of this course is that girls should not be treated differently than girls in regards to academics. After all, there is not a home economics class specifically for boys, so why should there be an engineering class specifically for girls?

The fact of the matter is that HHS needs to encourage girls to pursue science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) careers because women are outnumbered by men in the field of engineering. Only 200,000 women were employed in engineering fields in 2010, while 1,369,000 men were employed in similar careers in the field the same year, according to data released in Nov. 2013 by the National Science Foundation. In order to bridge this gap between the minority of girls in engineering and majority of boys, the Indiana Department of Education encouraged Project Lead the Way (PLTW) to promote growth.

"The girls class started with the PLTW standards and the things we had to do in order to be state certified for dual-credit," Josiah Parker, principles of engineering teacher, said.

Hilliard Davidson High School outside of Columbus, Ohio partnered with Ohio State University to initiate a Women in Engineering program. Although PLTW has dubbed results "remarkable" on its site, PLTW offers no definitive results to support this statement.

On paper, instating a similar class to Homestead's repertoire looks good; however, there are detriments to the program that should be given serious weight. An all-girls class detracts from the perspective that the male gender brings, the same as an all-boys class would lack a female perspective. That is not to say that both genders cannot bring a similar, if not the same, perspective, but goes to further show why both genders should be integrated.

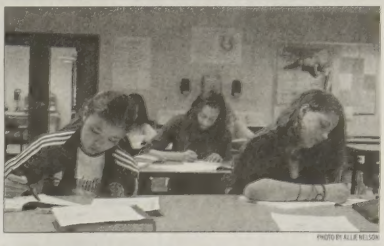

PHOTO BY ALLIE NELSON

Members of a class composed only of girls, female engineering students complete worksheets during their designated period.

"It would add more variety if there were boys (in the class) because it kind of feels sexist," Gabrielle Slayton (9), first-level engineering student, said.

The separation of genders only further ingrains the stigma that girls are inherently different than boys, which, yes, they are, but academically speaking, they should not be treated differently. It demeans the intellectual integrity of any girl entering into the engineering field to be seen as different than any male entering into the same field.

The engineering class exclusively for girls is a proactive attempt at bridging the gap between genders in the field of engineering, but in its practicality, it does not empower girls to be better engineers and instead demeans their worth as scientists, no matter the class's intentions.

As such, there should be different measures put into place to encourage the enrollment of girls into the engineering program. One such measure could be to have women currently involved in engineering, as well as other STEM careers, talk with girls specifically in middle school science classes about pursuing a STEM career. Sometimes, all someone needs is a light push in the right direction, that someone being a girl and the right direction being the engineering classes offered. By doing this, more girls would feel comfortable in their decision to pursue engineering in high school, and, hopefully, after high school as well. Encouragements like this cannot fix the gap of women engineers totally, but it is a good place to start.

TANGLED IN TECHNOLOGY

Inevitable reliance on computers equally promising, addictive

They call us the Millennials. Our generation is plagued with the reputation of holding a greater concern for social media than international affairs. A sizeable portion of Baby Boomers see us as nothing more than quasi-machines, relying on technology and destroying the art of human interaction. Drastically, according to Time Magazine, Millennials "lack the kind of empathy that allows them to feel concerned for others (...) (or) intellectually understand others' points of view," likely due to the "lack of face-to-face time" with one another. And to all of these accusations we collectively respond, "so what?"

THE ED BOARD

Priscilla Lin
William Ngo
Allie Nelson
Haiden Steingass
Jessica Tebben
Katie Dunlap
Kylie Poling
Megan Cater

As the first eLearning snow day has come and gone, it's evident that Millennials don't just rely on technology; they thrive on it. This generation has been given the incredible opportunity to transform a task that once involved thousands of resources (buses, administrators, lunch ladies, etc.) into a task requiring no more than a laptop and some internet service. Yes, Millennials rely on technology. Yes, they prioritize things that weren't even invented 40 years ago. But instead of society criticizing the isolation that many feel Millennials are now characterized by, it should see the potential for future impact that this generation has to offer.

Because of the ability to grasp technology-related tasks and ideas quickly, Millennials have the potential to not only further develop the technology already in existence, but to alter the mechanics of the world through new innovations. Previous generations, including the Baby Boomers, which occupy much of the school board and district administration, have already begun redefining the boundaries of education for the Millennial generation; it's only a matter of time before Millennials begin redefining societal norms too.

Despite the promising future ahead, members of previous generations argue that Millennials are tainted by technology: they're too narcissistic, impersonal and unrealistic. However, while the question of whether or not the Millennial generation has been harmed is still a largely debated topic, the question of what, or in this case who, tainted the Millennials, is obvious. The people who complain about the negative effects of technology on young minds are the same people who gave technology to them in the first place. By creating laptops and internet, the Baby Boomer generation supplied Millennials with Macbooks and iPhones. They gave their children all the technology they desired yet are surprised when it seems the Millennials are addicted. Now, students can even go to school online. It's a new era, and it's an era created long before Millennials were old enough to shape the future.

It's no longer productive to focus on how technology will hurt or hinder the lives of the people; according to Pew Research, technology has led Millennials to be "on course to become the most educated generation in American history." It's time, instead, to focus on the possible impact this technological era will have on the future, and the only way to find out is to follow in this district's footsteps: trust the Millennials, because someday, they might just change the world.

CARTOON BY EMILY SPATT

twitter take

The Spartana attempts to capture the most impulsive responses on Twitter.

Question: "If you could do anything over spring break, what would you do?"

@Spacecadet_Chet - Reece Lenwell (12) ▶ "Take the Homestead bus down to Siesta with 75% of the school."

@k_rawww5 - Katie Lael (10) ▶ "Never come back to school."

@makeit_Quick - Kate Quick (12) ▶ "hack into My Big Campus and permanently disable eLearning."

@xstrangebrewx - Keller O'Leary(11) ▶ "Shovel the rest of the snow out of my backyard."

@karateCHOPPER - Christian Hopper (12) ▶ "eLearning duhh!"

Club sports lack student recognition

Athletic organizations not supported by school, must reach out for support

BY COLBY SHOUP
Writer

For a long time, student-athletes of club sports like hockey and lacrosse have been complaining about a lack of attention. This has been blamed on both administration, as well as on fellow students. One of these student athletes is Mitch Yoakum (10), who plays attack for the lacrosse team.

"It's not that we are asking (the school) to pay for anything; we are just wanting to see some moral and student support," Yoakum said.

While attention and recognition from their peers, what they are unaware of the valid reason for why the school has a rule against advertising club sports.

Much like Campus life and similar organizations, club sports are completely separate entities from the school despite their usage of the school's name. Therefore, club sports are not regulated by the same rules, regulations or guidelines which restrict varsity sports like football and basketball.

"It's just like how we can't advertise for boys and girls clubs and sports activities, even though they may feature students from our school," Park Ginder, principal, said. "They aren't school sanctioned, so if a student gets bad grades they can still play on the club teams, which is not something varsity sport athletes can do."

Although it may be hard for student-athletes to accept, the school is justified in not allowing the club sports to advertise; however, this does not mean club sports cannot advertise for themselves. Using the immense powers of social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, student athletes can inform a large audience of supporters and hopefully raise attendance at games in the future.

"It's not that we are asking (the school) to pay for anything; we are just wanting to see some moral and student support."

MITCH YOAKUM (11)
Lacrosse Player

Although coaches cannot inform students through the morning announcements, club sports can still potentially attract large crowds. Utilizing the social media available has worked extremely well for the high school hockey team in attracting larger crowds and widespread support. The teams have started a joint Twitter account (@FWHSH) and website (fortwaynehighschoolhockey.com), both of which are frequently updated. This provides followers with up-to-date information about the teams and even offers live coverage.

Another potential solution for the problem is for student-athletes in club sports to advertise during lunch like Campus Life. This is completely legal under club sport rules and, like using social media to advertise, the method has the potential to attract large crowds unprecedented to Homestead club sports.

This could also help educate students who know little of the club sports being promoted, whether it be rugby, hockey or lacrosse. This awareness would not only cause an increase in attendance, but student interest in the sport.

The club sports here can complain all they want, but in the end, it is the responsibility of the team to garner the publicity and support they deserve. Many students are unaware the school even has hockey, rugby, lacrosse and bowling teams, and self-advertising is the only hope for change.

audio aficionados, 5

PHOTO BY TESSA VIRGLIO

Drastic changes to SAT to come in future

Alterations to make test more applicable will affect preparation and outcome results

By Allie Nelson
Executive Editor

No longer will the complaints about the SAT's obscure passages, erratic vocabulary and dreaded timed writing be as frequent as they are now. The College Board leaked the most drastic change to the test since the addition of the writing portion in 2005, which will be removed from the obligatory sections of the booklet in 2016.

With the shift to the optional essay, current freshmen will take the new version only if they partake in the exam during the fall semester of their senior year. Otherwise, only students in grades eight or below will be universally affected.

The removal of the 25-minute free response condenses the once three-hour and 45 minute test to a three-hour exam with an optional writing component of 50 minutes, according to abcnews.com.

This is a relief to some students, as the timed essay only adds to the stress the pressure-inducing test generates.

"I'm horrible at (timed writings) because I always need time to brainstorm," Shelby Payne (9) said. "I usually don't write as well and my sentences are choppy. I like to have a lot of time to write an essay."

The exclusion of the prepared, highly anticipated essay may also be strategic.

"The essay is kind of specific for a certain application for college, but it can also be disregarded by most," Annie Rumsey (11), March SAT test taker, said. "While the essay is basically a portion of writing that kids have to adapt to, and it's pretty uniform (...) Originality has sort of been dismissed over the past years because kids are figuring out what kind of essay they need to write to get a good score."

Those SAT notecards from middle school Language Arts are in danger of being obsolete to those who decide to sign up for the updated test. The College Board intends to incorporate words "widely used in college and career," according to abcnews.com.

> "The changes (to vocabulary) would indicate to me that some of the words they put on there are just ridiculous."
>
> **JAMIE SMITH**
> *Etymology Teacher*

Etymology teacher Jamie Smith supports the decision to begin the transition to words specific to certain fields of study.

However, she appreciates the value in some of the current words lists which contain language that appears in reading and is common in everyday communication.

"The changes (to vocabulary) would indicate to me that some of the words they put on there are just ridiculous," Smith said. "So those need to go. I mean, there's some truth behind the fact that some words die out over time. But again it kind of remains to be seen how many of those changes really happen."

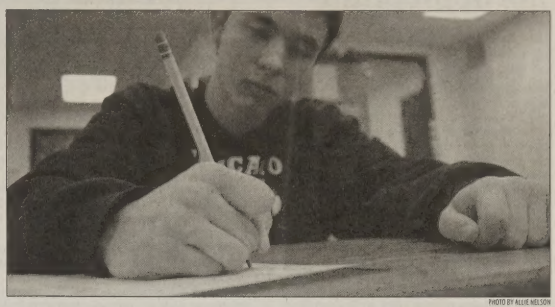

PHOTO BY ALLIE NELSON

Sam Carroll (11) fills in scantron as many students do while taking the SAT.

Whether the College Board's motivations lie in competition with other standardized tests, specifically the ACT, or in an attempt to redirect focus away from dissimilarities among scores, results will be less varied. Because students will no longer be penalized for wrong answers, scores are bound to reside on a higher end of the spectrum than they did before.

"I'm curious myself to see how things are going to change because, based on these results, the ability for the SAT to predict who will get into what college will be severely altered or could make things more competitive or less competitive," Rumsey said.

Despite the frenzy of those seeking information regarding the changes, preparation for the new exam will not differ in extreme from that of other years.

"I trust the College Board to some extent," Smith said. "I think their knowledge of what kids need to be successful in college is good. I think a good reader is a good reader and a good writer is a good writer so I think Homestead does things well. It doesn't matter what happens with the test. I think our kids will be ready."

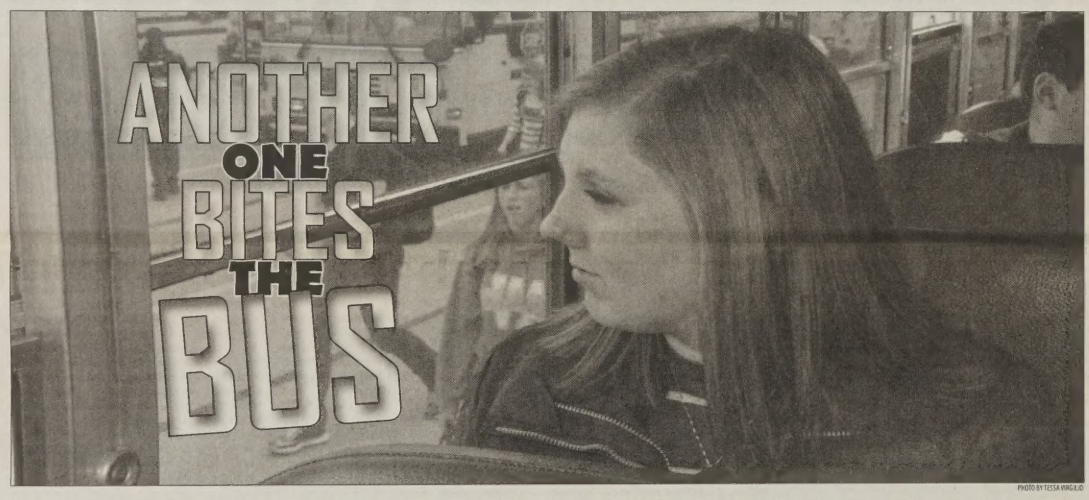

PHOTO BY TESSA VIRGLIO

Alyssa Corns (12) looks out the window as the buses prepare to leave. Corns is one of few seniors who still ride the bus. Because she rides the bus, she must come and leave school at set times.

Mature age does not guarantee the upperclassmen their driving freedom to school

By William Ngo
Executive Editor

The yellow dragon reliably transports its students regardless of weather, but weathering the bus for 12 years has become a rare feat, especially in this school district. Before the school implemented the general lot, drivers as young as sophomores could park in a specially designated area. Numbered passes hang on rear view mirrors to signify parking privilege and freedom; few, however, do not know that liberty and suffer the plastic leather seats throughout all their school years.

ROUND AND ROUND

450,000 school buses provide transportation nationwide. **54** percent K-12 kids ride those buses daily. That means nearly **26** million students use school transportation.

SOURCE: WCSSCHOOLS.COM

Extracurricular activities are one main reason a majority of students choose to pay the $35 yearly parking permit, but Vanessa Widgent's (12) family taught her that people have to work for the things they want in life. Because she does not have a job and therefore no income, she cannot purchase a car. Widgent inconveniently takes the bus home first in order to pick up a family car and drive herself back to school for dance practice.

"At first I was really mad (to ride the bus) because I am the only senior on my bus," Widgent said. "There are no juniors, and the rest are underclassmen."

She admits, however, she enjoys not worrying about car maintenance, gasoline and insurance. Next year when she heads off to college at Ball State University, she will rely on the useful bus service or her roommate's car. Throughout college, she plans to find a job and gather enough money to purchase a vehicle. Until then she will continue to endure bus emergency drills and crowded two-hour delay days.

"Sometimes I'll sit on the bus, and some freshman will come sit next to me and be awkward about it," Widgent said. "I'm like, 'I'm not going to bite you.'"

Awkward encounters are not the only downside to riding the bus as a senior. Riding the bus has not been the most pleasant experience for Tyler Helm (12).

"(Riding the bus as a senior) feels the same as it did every other year–a lot of potholes," Helm said.

Waking up early enough to actually get on the bus is only half the battle. Whenever Helm misses the bus, he ignores the hassle, goes back to sleep and deals with school later in the day.

Taking full advantage of her license, Sara Chokenea (11) began driving the first day of her junior year. Driving has provided her benefits such as staying after school for test remakes, tutoring and show choir practice. If she had to ride the bus, Chokenea would feel frustrated because she would no longer have the power to choose what time she leaves or arrives at home. She prefers driving to have personal freedom at school but recognizes the benefits of riding the bus in any grade level.

"I don't think (being a senior on the bus) has bad connotation because not everybody can afford to have a car," Chokenea said. "It's a smart decision because you get to school on time without having to be worried about being late."

In addition to providing transportation to school, cars make traveling in the general city possible. Because the city fails to operate a train system or an extensive bus system, owning a car can be arguably necessary for job commuting, grocery shopping or simply leisure shopping. On the other hand, metropolitan capitals like London, Widgent's dream city, offer dependable and accessible public transportation.

"I think (owning a car) is important because it makes going places easier," Chokenea said. "Depending on where you live, not everything is in biking or walking distance."

While leaving the school at free will represents independence and maturity, the bus offers a safe, reliable source of transportation and contributes to the entire school experience.

Prolonged winter weather gains negative responses

Mother nature plagues supposedly warmer months with chilled temperatures, becomes inconvenient

By Awbrei Vachon
Writer

Oh the weather outside is frightful, and the people are getting quite spiteful. What seems to be a problem every year is back once again: the prolonged winter. People say "April showers bring May flowers," but this year's inconsistent weather has left people wondering if spring will ever make its way around.

An old folklore suggests a relationship between winter and spring, saying when there is a rough winter there will be a better spring, and this theory has left residents of Fort Wayne hoping there is truth behind it.

"When it first started snowing, I was really enjoying it because we didn't have school and it was so pretty," Jordan LaBelle (10) said. "(But) now that we're moving to spring and it's all slushy, it's not really that fun anymore."

All around the city are piles of mush and slosh – a cold, gross reminder of winter's stubbornness to dissipate and make way for green grass, flip-flops and happiness.

"I'm so desperate for warm weather," Jimmy Rapoza (10) said. "(I hope it will be) warm enough to wear shorts (and) I can begin fishing."

Not only does the current weather sadden the hearts of many, but it also frustrates them by becoming an inconvenience in day-to-day life.

"The biggest inconvenience is probably deciding if I'm going to wear a jacket to school or not," Shealee Zielinski (11) said. "I could walk out to my car and it's 50 (degrees) and nice or I could walk out with no jacket and it's below three (degrees)."

As the eagerness for capris, t-shirts and flip-flops meets no relief, people turn their attention towards the upcoming spring break for a little taste of warm weather to help them power through the rest of this awful season.

"We're still kind of stuck in winter, so it's surprising that in (less than a week) we're actually supposed to be on spring break," LaBelle said. "It just feels like it's coming up so fast when winter has stretched on so long."

> "We're still kind of stuck in winter, so it's surprising that in (less thana week) we're actually supposed to be on spring break."
>
> **JORDAN LABELLE (10)**
> *Winter Weather Opposer*

Ditching this city for a little bit of paradise will be the answer to a multitude of prayers, but if a better spring has not crept up by the time everyone returns from break, there will be just as many scowls and broken hearts.

According to rumors, however, those returning from vacation might be greeted with one more winter blizzard. The Farmer's Almanac has mentioned the possibility of a late snowstorm near the middle of the April.

"(Coming back from vacation) is going to be such a big change when you've been spending all of that week in 80 degree weather," Zielinksi said. "(Coming home will) be a huge disappointment."

A better spring as a result of a harsh winter only holds some truth. As stated by the American Meteorological Society, a heavier winter will most likely result in more precipitation in the spring, which in turn will most likely result in a better chance for greenery this upcoming season as well as a pleasant summer.

Either way, people are still tired of winter and cannot wait to see what the spring will hold.

"All this (snow) just needs to stop," Zielinski said. "(This winter has been) fierce like Beyoncé."

Students must be vigilant through third quarter slump

I had a teacher in middle school who preached the importance of the getting past the third quarter slump. She always told us we should be diligent about keeping up with homework during the third quarter, but I never really listened a whole lot because I didn't think I needed to. She was kind of crazy about it, but she was my favorite teacher so it didn't really matter.

I guess I thought she was kind of insane because: I had never heard of the third quarter slump before, and I had never seen it affect my grades as much as she implied it would.

Since beginning high school nearly three years ago, I can now fully understand the extent of the third quarter slump and its prevalence within my life. It's not so much a detriment to your GPA as it is to your overall motivation and quality of work.

JESS SAYIN'

BY JESSICA TEBBEN
Life Editor

Of course, not everyone feels the full force of the third quarter slump. Some people, bless their souls, actually go home and do their homework quickly and to the best of their ability. If you have done this in the past, continue to do this. Not only does it give you more free time, but it also gives you more time to live your life.

For me and many other high schoolers, however, after-school hours consist of going home and taking a nice long nap, watching some television and eating a bunch of food. By 8, you haven't started any homework and you're left hoping that you didn't have too much.

The third quarter is nearly over, and all of this stress of last-minute homeworking will be behind you. However, it is sometimes hard to shake the bad habits of laziness.

Sometimes, in order for students to shake the third quarter blues, they need to hear a halftime pep talk from a passionate coach and need to be bumped around a little bit by their teammates before taking the fourth quarter by storm. Unfortunately for you, school isn't a sport.

Instead, you have to do it yourself because you're an independent student who doesn't need a teacher in order to be great. You can get your grades up all by yourself; you're focused enough to rule the entire world (or at least the school).

Of course, this perseverance and fierce motivation will not just come with a change of thought and change of heart. You have to create the change in yourself. No one else can climb this mountain of homework for you unless you pay them or something which you shouldn't do because you're better than that.

Since your third quarter slump experiences probably consisted mainly of watching television and eating salty snacks in order to procrastinate on school work, remove some of the stress from your shoulders and use snacks and television as a reward for doing homework.

It's kind of like getting a job. You go to work and work your hardest to make money so you can do whatever you want with what you have. Except you don't make money at school, and the only thing you receive is the satisfaction of getting decent grades and more time to actually live the life you've always wanted.

If you're still struggling to get out of the slump, think of all the opportunities you'll have once you start finishing homework early. You can probably fly to London and back in all the time you'll save.

And if your grades are slipping during this uphill battle, use it as motivation to get better grades next quarter. Take spring break as a time to essentially get your life at school together.

Although the third quarter was tough, the fourth quarter is almost here. This is your last-ditch effort to redeem yourself in the eyes of your teachers and your peers. They already believe in you; all you have to do is show them that you're capable of being the best you can be.

Or, of course, you can continue to slack off. Honestly most of us, including myself, probably will. That's fine too.

PHOTO BY TESSA VIRGILLIO

Sahar Moshref (10) uses headphones to listen to music in preparation for an Audio Aficionados meeting, which occurs every Monday at 2:35 p.m.

Audio Aficionados offers new opportunity for music lovers

BY TESSA VIRGILLIO
Writer

Joining the plethora of clubs already offered at school, Audio Aficionados provides a unique and musical twist to a typical after school activity. With this new club's popularity is associated with its laid-back atmosphere, opportunities to meet new people with similar tastes and an overall excitement about the knowledge of music.

The new club, advised by Andrew Dunn, radio teacher, offers students the opportunity to stay after school on Mondays to listen to new and alternative types of music, as well as share knowledge about the genres and artists featured during the meetings.

"I would really like to see (attendees) gain some knowledge about music in general," Dunn said. "I tend to incorporate some older artists into what we're doing; history of music is a big thing, which I think is overlooked big time by most people of a younger age group. It's just a step in the right direction."

> "I think in general it just makes new opportunities for students to listen to different music from what they usually listen to."
>
> **SAHAR MOSHREF (10)**
> *Club Member*

According to club attendee Sahar Moshref (10), the club is a relaxing extracurricular activity that is enjoyable to attend.

"I think in general it just makes new opportunities for students to listen to different music from what they usually listen to," Moshref said.

Much like Moshref, Eesha Bemra (11) believes the club provides an after-school safe haven for music lovers who are looking to broaden their knowledge of different genres of music.

"(Audio Aficionados) is a great place for people who listen to alternative and indie music to get together, listen to some of the newest alternative releases and discuss musical tastes and updates in the world of music news," Bemra said.

Other than being a place of rest and music rejuvenation, Dunn hopes share his knowledge of music with students who attend in an effort to give them the opportunity to participate in the radio program.

"I think (the club) has a bunch that it can bring to Homestead just because I think there are a lot of students who are being left out of being (a part of) the radio station," Dunn said. "I think it's a good way to start bringing other kids around to work with us and be part of the station and feel like they're a part of something bigger."

Audio Aficionados, as it is rightfully named, is centered on music and is a unique way to spend time after school. Although there are many clubs offered to students, none have an atmosphere where students are completely immersed in music.

Not only do students have the opportunity to do nothing but listen to music and spend time with people who have similar tastes in music after school, but they also get to share other perks such as exploring music reviews and getting to listen to some albums before they have been released for airplay. Aside from the great atmosphere and even greater music, attendees agree that Dunn works hard to make their experience in Audio Aficionados memorable.

Students are encouraged to come join the Audio Aficionados whenever possible if interested in exploring alternative music and broadening knowledge of music in general.

"Check (Audio Aficionados) out," Dunn said. "There's no pressure here. It's just a relaxing environment."

Student combats gun violence

Mayor Tom Henry invites student to conference in New Orleans

BY MALLORY MCCAULEY
Online Editor

With the increasing gun violence in Fort Wayne among African American males, Deshean Jordan (12) took a trip with Mayor Tom Henry to the City United Conference. Fort Wayne was among 50 other cities who sent mayors and youth representatives who recognize the growing increase in gun violence.

Jordan is on the Youth Council of Fort Wayne and was nominated by the leader of this council to go to the conference. The conference was dedicated to help the attendees engage in peer-to-peer learning opportunities geared towards strategizing and a long-term violence reduction in Fort Wayne.

"(We were there to learn how to) implement certain things set up by the conference," Jordan said. "Simple things (such as) getting children to read and employment is important (in helping to reduce gun violence)."

Both Jordan and his mother recognized a lot to gain from this opportunity.

"I think he gained a lot of insight on how to deal with the violence among young African American males of Fort Wayne with gun violence, which was what the conference was about," Deshean's mom, Danyelle Jordan said. "Focus on young African American males concerning violence (was valuable to learn about because) Fort Wayne has a major problem with gun violence. It was wonderful for him to get engaged and help make city a safer place."

▶11,078
firearm related deaths in 2011.
SOURCE: CDC.GOV

Deshean also saw similar benefits reaped from this conference.

"I wanted to go (to this conference) because Fort Wayne has an increase in violence, which is important to be involved in since it's happening in our city, and since the mayor even recognized the issue," Deshean said.

This conference was dedicated to bringing recognition to the issue at hand, and during it statistics were revealed indicating that there is a rise in gun violence in Fort Wayne among African American males. Deshean and the mayor have recognized this to be an important issue in need of being resolved.

"This conference was a wonderful opportunity to go to help the community of Fort Wayne reduce gun violence," Danyelle said.

Along with the statistics brought forward, there were also plans being formulated to help this problem be reduced in the city. Not only is gun violence a problem in Fort Wayne, but it is in other cities as well – including the 50 cities that attended this City United conference.

"Deshean was a key part of the team Fort Wayne sent to the Cities United convening in New Orleans," Mayor Tom Henry said. "As a member of my Youth Engagement Council, Deshean had identified public safety as one of our city's most important issues. This was a great opportunity for him to engage with policymakers and city leaders, both from Fort Wayne and cities across the country, to discuss ways to reduce violence in our communities. Deshean provided a very important perspective as a youth delegate."

PHOTO BY MEGAN BUTLER

Deshean Jordan (12) attended a conference dedicated to reducing gun violence and making Fort Wayne a safer place.

Gun violence in the city has showed itself to be a serious problem which needs group effort to organize solutions that would help bring it to an end.

"To make the community safer, we all have to work together to fix this issue," Deshean said. "We all play an important part in the solution and all have to collaborate in order to solve this problem."

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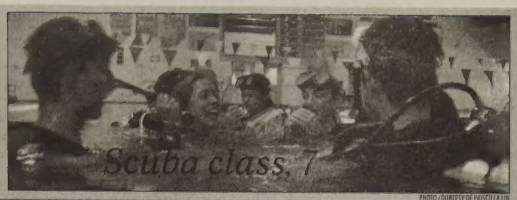

PHOTO COURTESY OF PRISCILLA LIN

THE SPRING AWAKENING

Snowy weather fails to impede training

The track team has already been hard at work, starting its season at the beginning of March and preparing for sectionals, regionals and state at the start of June. With a few new members to add, the team looks forward to the upcoming year.

"We have a very young team and some new coaching staff this year, but it is going very well which is giving our team a refreshing start to this season," Felicia Wehrle (12), varsity pole vaulter, said.

The team had many challenges to overcome, a couple being the weather and the inability to practice outside where it normally would.

"We have had to do most of our workouts inside instead of on the track," Taylor Busch (12), 3200 meter runner said. "We do our best to train just as hard inside as we would outside. As long as we make the most of our days that we can go outside, I think we will still be prepared."

The team is taking on some big competition this season, including meets against New Haven, DeKalb, Columbia City, Carroll and Northrop.

Ten of the teams 14 meets are away, so the team not only has a competitive season ahead of them but will also spend a fair amount of time traveling. However, the team remains positive, determined and ready for its competition.

"I look forward to working hard at practice with my teammates and seeing our whole team improve as the season progresses," Busch said.

PHOTO BY MEGAN BUTLER

Morgann Williams (11) performs high-knees during a team practice.

New competitors challenge young team

Heading into its season, the softball team faces many challenges, including a young team and heavy competition, but is prepared to work through the year with the goal of having a straight winning record.

"We have a lot of freshmen, and I want to see how the they contribute to the team," Jessica Schneider (11), said. "Since we have (many) underclassmen, we just need to work with (them) and have them involved."

With a winning record left over from last season, the girls still have some well-established teams they are preparing to play this season.

"I want to beat Carroll because they creamed us last year, and (I want to beat) Lakewood Park Christian. They won state last year for Class A," Schneider said.

Some of the girls' other opponents include New Haven, Snider, Huntington North, Norwell, DeKalb and Bellmont. With a busier schedule this season, the team faces more competitive obstacles.

"Our biggest challenge this year is the caliber of our competition," Veronika Grote (12) said. "We altered the schedule this year to increase our competition and play some teams we have never played before."

Because of the new additions, the softball team will have to quickly adjust to their foreign and unpredictable teams.

> "Our biggest challenge this year is the caliber of our competition. We altered the schedule this year to increase our competition and play some teams we have never played before."
>
> **VERONIKA GROTE (12)**
> *Senior Player*

The girls are optimistic about the start of their season and are preparing the best they can through the challenges they face. Through teamwork and perseverance, the team will push through obstacles with success.

"We have a really strong competition in Carroll and East Noble, so winning the conference outright would be a great accomplishment," Grote said.

Past success inspires players to achieve

Coming from a reputable season last year, the rugby team is looking to continue carrying its momentum from the previous season all the way to the state championship game. Tyler Fix (11) sees a glimpse of a great season from the very start.

"During our jamboree against Carroll and Warsaw, our two rivals from last year we were able to keep the score zero to zero the entire game unlike last year when we would most likely be down," Fix said. "Even with some of our senior leaders missing, we played an outstanding game in terrible conditions."

After the games against Carroll and Warsaw, teammate Isaiah Anderson (10) is as optimistic as Fix to tackle the upcoming season.

"I think we will do great. We have a lot of potential, and I think we can make it to state," Anderson said. "This is going to be a great season, and I can't wait."

At the beginning of each season, there is always one school that the team foresees to be the most challenging. Out of all of the competitors, Warsaw creates the most pressure within the boys.

The anticipated opponent is fairly large, fast and very skilled at the game, according to Fix.

Teammates may agree on the team to beat; however, the technical aspects of the rivalry are not the only reason for the highly anticipated matchup held every year.

"I think Warsaw (is our team to beat) because we just don't like to lose to them," Anderson said.

Despite a looming season fast approaching, members of the team are confident going into the spring. They are willing to put in the effort and dedication to accomplish their goal.

"I believe that we have a pretty good chance of going all the way to state," Fix said.

> "I think we will do great. We have a lot of potential, and I think we can make it to state. This is going to be a great season, and I can't wait."
>
> **ISAIAH ANDERSON (10)**
> *Eager Rugby Member*

Sole senior leads with intention to win

With spring fast approaching, the boys lacrosse team has already begun to prepare for a season of high expectations. As past years' successes have asserted, the boys lacrosse program is focused on showing that they are capable of a title-winning season.

"This year, (our goal) is to win state or bust," Harry Silcox (12) said. "I think it's time for us to show how good of a team we have become."

Silcox, the only senior on this year's team, has a lot of responsibility on his shoulders and is prepared to bring success for the school's program in the form of a run towards a state title.

"As the only senior, I have to do a lot of things like making sure everyone is on task and focused (at all times)," Silcox said. "(We have) been conditioning five days a week since January. It is a tough schedule, but the team will do everything it can to gain an advantage over our opponents."

Several first time players have joined the team, and these new additions will serve to be important, hoping to add certain qualities along with needed depth to the team.

"Even though I am an upperclassman, this is my first year playing and other varsity players know a lot more than (myself)," Steven Regan (11) said. "My role will be learning as much as possible and hitting outside shots (when playing)."

Performing well in games against conference rivals and other strong programs is an emphasis for the team, as well as a motivation to work harder to ensure these important wins.

"I know that a lot of the (players) are looking forward to playing Concordia," Silcox said. "It is always fun to play against teams you (are rivals with) since everyone plays hungry and the game is competitive."

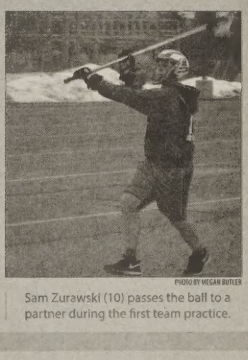

PHOTO BY MEGAN BUTLER

Sam Zurawski (10) passes the ball to a partner during the first team practice.

Confidence remains a vital component

A new season for the girls tennis team began on March 17, bringing aspirations for both individuals and the team as a whole.

After losing five seniors from the previous year, the team hopes to continue to develop to face adversity and compete for a sectional title.

"I hope we can win the sectional title again this year to prove to ourselves that we can overcome the loss," Morgan Caudill (12) said. "(The team) hopes to win as many matches as possible and improve the season record so that we can go as far as we can in the postseason."

Confidence is important for the team dynamic and as upperclassmen, Caudill and Annie Rumsey (11) hold responsibilities to lead and motivate teammates, both young and old.

"My main goal is to unify the team as a whole from the top players to the beginning players," Rumsey said. "Individual and team achievement is attainable through dedication and maximizing (every) opportunity on the court, and (the team) hopes to come out of the gate strong and confident."

Events taking place outside of games will prove to be essential for team-building and the development of underclassmen tennis players.

Practice and team events will allow for an improved team dynamic that will translate to the court.

"The upperclassmen will feel more obligated to have a good work ethic so that we can encourage others to work well," Caudill said. "Confidence is important during a tennis match and supporting the underclassmen can help them improve."

Although there will be some difficulty against talented opponents, the outlook towards conference competition in April is one of success.

"We will be successful as long as each girl maintains confidence and plays her best game of tennis each match," Rumsey said. "Having strong returning players and a large number of promising underclassmen, the potential for our team is huge."

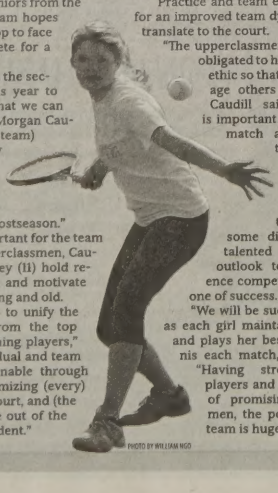

PHOTO BY WILLIAM NGO

Game adversity increases dedication

After losing to Lafayette Jefferson in the second round of regionals last season, the baseball team is anticipating a winning season with a long run to state in the postseason.

"Hopefully all the hard work put in the off-season shows in some guys," Tyler Zimske (12) said, "This year has potential to be a special year."

Brady Sheehan (10) played varsity baseball as a freshman and is looking at the seniors to lead the team.

"I think the season will be based off of all the seniors, and they are really going to get us to play hard," Sheehan said, "We will have a lot of seniors coming back so that will help a lot."

After winning against Carroll in the first round of regionals last season, the Chargers are the number one team to beat again. Being in the conference always makes Carroll a huge target for the team.

"Carroll probably is our toughest opponent because they are in our conference, and they always seem to put together a good team," Sheehan said.

The athletes have a high level of competition this season and are looking forward to the challenge.

"Carroll is always tough in conference play, but I am looking forward to our match up with Cathedral," Zimske said, "They are always a state contender. It will be nice playing such a high caliber team."

After months of hard work in the weight room and working out with members of the team, the team seems confident in a good season and a successful postseason.

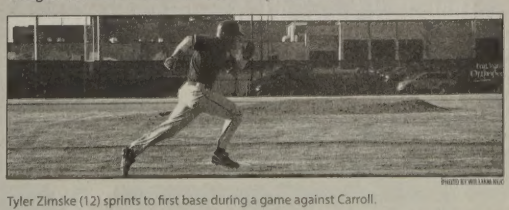

PHOTO BY WILLIAM NGO

Tyler Zimske (12) sprints to first base during a game against Carroll.

Pressure on student-athletes inhibits ability to enjoy childhood

James woke up this morning after pressing the snooze button four times. He rolled out of bed, his muscles ached, and his joints creaked as he set foot on the floor.

Despite his exhaustion, he had another 40-hour week ahead of him. Monday through Friday, James worked tirelessly, dealt with his coworkers and took direction from his boss. However, James is not a middle aged man with a corporate job.

He is an adolescent athlete; his coworkers are his teammates, his boss is his coach and he still has a 40 hour week ahead of him.

Though childhood and teenage sports can be joyous, memorable experiences, they can also be a strain that cause premature, unnecessary stress to kids who do not have complete control over their own lives yet.

I joined sports as soon as I moved to Fort Wayne when I was five; I do not recall my parents persuading me or giving me extra desert to make sure I followed through with taking classes and going to practice.

It was probably something I decided on my own, and as I got older, I progressively took it more seriously. In fact, I split my time for many years between dance and basketball, and when the day came that I had to focus my time on one or the other, I remember it being my decision. Though, to this day, my parents like to joke with me and say I would have gained more out of basketball.

HAIDEN'S HIGHLIGHTS

BY HAIDEN STEINGASS
Sports Editor

However, not everyone's parents are willing to let their child pilot his or her own decisions at such a young age. I find it completely understandable for parents to sign their kids up for karate or soccer to make friends and learn discipline.

They need to flourish and create social skills in a safe environment. The tables turn when a father decides that football should be his 10-year-old son's entire focus or when a mother registers her 4-year-old daughter for six dance classes a week.

On top of the time poured into a sport, there are countless other expectations for children and their parents to consider as well. From the time kids enter grade school until the moment they graduate, they have an obligation to put school above all, with family, friends, extracurriculars, to calculate into their schedule, too.

Being involved in sports is a positive, beneficial influence in a young person's life. The issue at hand is the incomprehensible amounts of time some children put into sports as they watch all other priorities fall to a short second.

This controversy swarms the media in television shows like "Dance Moms" and "Friday Night Tykes." Viewers see children being put to the test and stressed at an abnormal level for such a young age. Many people find these programs entertaining and humorous as coaches shout at their athletes and ask extreme tasks of them.

> "The issue at hand is the incomprehensible amounts of time some children put into sports as they watch all other priorities fall to a short second."
>
> **HAIDEN STEINGASS**

However, every time my sister has Dance Moms playing on TV, I refuse to watch the destructive, pompous attitudes of some of the people on the show.

For those not familiar with the show, it follows the members of the Abby Lee Dance Company. Owner and director Abby is infamous for her harsh criticism of the young dancers and their mothers.

Her overbearing screams and demands leave the children visually distraught and emotionally damaged.

Although dance is competitive and demanding by nature, the intense, cutthroat tactics displayed can only be experienced by watching the show firsthand.

The less popular program "Friday Night Tykes" on the Esquire Network parallels the extreme dynamic of the lives of young football players.

Despite the violence of the sport, helmet to helmet contact should not be encouraged of 7 and 8-year-olds as it has been on the show, especially because it is illegal in any serious, professional league.

Because of the uproar and controversy the inappropriate acts have caused, the head coach of the team was suspended indefinitely. Even though improvements have been made, there are lasting impacts at risk when abusing the impressions of child athletes.

Both television programs depict inappropriate behavior that is damaging to a child's development, self-esteem and outlook on the true intention of sports.

Despite the benefits being involved in a sport can bring, a child has one task–to be a kid. It is not his or her obligation to put in a 40-hour week or put up with a demanding boss quite yet.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF PRISCILLA LIN

Summer gym members scuba dive in the SACS Natatorium. The school's scuba diving class will be offered during the 2014-15 school year.

New scuba class captures students' attention

BY ETHAN YDE
Writer

Students diving into the new year and setting up schedules could notice a plethora of newly introduced courses including new dual-credit courses and free electives. Of these classes, Scuba Diving, aims to teach students the basic fundamentals of scuba diving expeditions and equipment use, while giving them hands-on experience in the subject.

"I chose this class for next year because I wanted to become certified, and I felt like it would be a great opportunity to get my mind off of other heavy curriculum," Adam Newport (11) said.

The new scuba diving class was announced alongside multiple other physical education electives, including recreational sports and activities, but it has a real world application immediately after passing the class. Upon completion of this particular course, students are able to receive certification to scuba dive anywhere in the country.

"I am planning on taking it my senior year because I want to go into the marine biology field when I graduate," Elizabeth McAninch (10) said. "I think the best part about the class will be learning to use the scuba equipment and getting certified, which would allow me to have knowledge prior to the first time I actually go scuba diving in an ocean."

Marine biology enthusiast or not, the class is open to any student as long as they have completed the two required physical education credits. As soon as the school year begins, the students are introduced to the techniques, equipment and precautions involved in the scuba diving experience. The course will even take students to the Southwest Natatorium at Summit Middle School, where they will get tangible experience in the diving well section of the swimming pool.

Mike Miller, the scuba diving teacher next year, is a scuba diving aficionado who not only teaches physical education, but has also been a scuba diving instructor for years before this class. He plans to introduce a larger number of people to a physical activity that only a small number of people are given the resources and instruction to participate in.

"I want to take scuba diving because I enjoy water sports and it's a good skill to have if you want to travel to or live in tropical climates," Sarah Camino (10) said. "I'm planning on going to school in California, and it will be a good skill to have. Also, I think it will be a fun class to finish high school with."

The course also brings a possibility of renting out equipment to students in order to complete projects like scuba diving in ponds or the pool. A good chunk of the in-class time will be devoted for lessons and tests on what students have been learning over each section. While a number of lessons are planned for the one semester time span, the class should still be a stress-free experience for students.

This innovative course opens up new possibilities for students in the category of sports and hobbies, and gives them the opportunity to make a lasting impact on their lives through being a certified scuba diver.

"I'm excited to maybe even start a scuba club with certified divers with a bunch of local trips or even research trips down in Australia," Miller said. "I'm happy that we can get a lot of kids certified, because diving is a lot of fun and I've been diving since I was certified in Japan in 2005."

Divers prepare for their scuba lesson during a summer gym class.

March Madness infects students

68-team college basketball tournament full of upsets, lacks Indiana teams

BY IAN MCKENZIE
Copy Editor

For the past couple weeks, only one thing has mattered to most basketball fans: letting the hypnotic bounce of basketball resuscitate them from the coma of winter. Widely heralded as the most entertaining champion-determiner in sports, the National Collegiate Association of Athletes (NCAA) tournament, a 68-team tournament comprising the best teams in college basketball, currently rages on in the sports world, barreling towards the national championship game on April 7.

For many in the state, though, the absence of any college basketball team from the state of Indiana–a foregone conclusion after the IPFW Mastodons fell in their conference tournament championship–casts a more neutral hue on the tournament.

Many trade in crimson, cream, black or gold for the colors of the most popular underdog, eager to see the heavyweight favorites fall on their faces.

"Since IU and IPFW didn't make it this year, I'll probably end up rooting for the underdogs," Clayton McClain (12) said. "Upsets are definitely the most exciting part of March Madness."

Still more look for distant relations to the program of their choice for an adoptable March team.

"If IU is not in the tournament, I will root for Duke," Jill Grote, math teacher and avid IU fan, said. "Coach (Mike Krzyzewski) used to be an assistant many years ago for Coach (Bob Knight) when they were coaching at Army. Because of Coach K's connection to Coach Knight, Duke has always been my second favorite team."

Though Indiana's vortex of rich basketball history captures the lion's share of the school, select few enjoy a different heritage and perspective.

"I've always been a Virginia Cavaliers fan; both of my parents and other relatives went to school there, so I've grown up cheering for them," Morgan Caudill (12) said. "They haven't been that great at basketball in a while, so it's been awesome to see them have such a great season and to win the ACC tournament(...) Virginia's definitely good at playing defensively. This year they're one of the best defensive teams in the country."

As of the first weekend of the tournament, the Cavaliers remain alive, methodically disassembling Coastal Carolina and Memphis with their slow-paced style of efficient offense and stifling defense.

For nearly everyone, regardless of team affiliation, madness also takes the form of attempting to cash in on the gambler's paradise of ludicrous odds and joining in on the fun of attempting to predict 67 games correctly.

Everyone has their own methods, one being to treat their bracket as a form of wish fulfillment.

"I usually fill out one bracket seriously, and on the other I choose a lot more upsets just for fun," McClain said. "It's interesting to see how the two compare after the tournament ends."

Of course, bracket strategies take nearly infinite forms.

"I usually do fill out a couple brackets," Grote said. "My strategy tends to be to look where the game is being played and which team is closest to that location. I also factor in the difficulty of the conference the team comes from and also the seed number."

Some define the madness as the antics of gym-imprisoned basketball coaches, pallid, sweaty and screeching bloody murder from the bench–something Grote recalls Bob Knight demonstrating in her first experience at Assembly Hall. Others define it as seeing Until Now Irrelevant University knock off the University of Perennially Favored. Still more see it as a chance to witness their team find a precious second in the spotlight. For all though, channeling the madness of March just feels good.

PHOTO BY REAGAN WIESELL

An excited viewer watches a basketball game. The tournament concludes on April 7.

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"INDIAN" "ALIEN" "FOREIGN"

Racial generalization targets individuals without validity

My name is Hamna Qureshi.
I live in Fort Wayne, Indiana.
I live a satisfying life.
I have great friends,
good grades
and an amazing family.
I have no complaints.
Except one.
I am a Muslim in America.

PHOTOS BY WILLIAM NGO

Being Muslim is not the issue. No, the issue is practicing my faith in America, the country of "tolerance." Instead of tolerance, however, I find that Muslims are facing increasing scrutiny and contempt.

Every time I read an article online that even remotely talks about Islam, I cannot help myself from scrolling down to the comments. These comments are often mean, racist and ignorant. I've seen everything from "send the Muslims back to their countries" to "burn them down while they are in their mosques."

The latter comment was especially disconcerting; it scared me to think that someone would actually wish violence upon another group of people. What's even worse than the comment itself is number of "likes" it garnered. People agreed with the commenter. I was heartbroken.

I asked myself what Muslims had done to deserve that kind of treatment. Unfortunately, the answer to that question presents itself almost every day in the form of global news reports about suicide bombings and oppressive Islamic regimes.

I can see why a segment of the American population hates Muslims. Worse, I cannot blame these Americans for what they do not know about Islam.

Just this morning I overheard a conversation about a girl whose father was afraid to sit next to a Muslim man on a plane after 9/11. She did not know that I had overheard the conversation, but it hurt to hear that even students at Homestead are wary of Muslims. After the tragic events of 9/11, the whole country has regarded Muslims with suspicion. And this suspicion is not entirely baseless.

Many Americans only see Muslims in the media when there is some kind of conflict or violence involved. This negative portrayal often leads to the misconception that Islam is a violent and cruel religion when, in reality, it is anything but. In addition to claims about Islamic cruelty, people often also hear stories about Muslim women suffering through abuse.

The hijab, better known as the headscarf, has become a symbol of oppression in Western society. Ironically enough, though, the women I know who wear the hijab are some of the most confident and intelligent women I have ever met.

I have a friend who started wearing the headscarf in fifth grade. For years, her decision to embrace modesty has been questioned. Questions about her headscarf range from whether she is bald to whether her parents are involved in terrorist groups.

Despite the scrutiny regarding her choice, she has emerged as one of the most poised and confident people I know. By wearing the hijab, my friend has shown her complete acceptance of her faith in a country where this faith is looked upon with suspicion and animosity. I hope that one day I can wear the hijab with the same self-assurance I see in other women who wear the scarf.

At school, students sometimes ask questions about Islam. Most of the time, I love answering questions because they give me the opportunity to address my religion truthfully. Other times, I wish I would not have to answer these questions because there are times when I feel like I have to choose my words carefully so that people do not misunderstand what I am saying about Islam.

I have to make sure that I do not inadvertently feed into the negative stigma surrounding my faith. People often question why many Islamic nations still adopt strict laws and harsh Hammurabi-style punishments for crimes such as adultery and theft.

There is no easy answer to this question or other similar questions about the strictness of Islam. Some questions can only be answered through experience, and without this experience, people often draw their own incorrect conclusions about Islam.

My wish for Muslims—and other misrepresented minorities in America—is for them to be truly accepted into American society. My wish for other Americans is for them to learn about Islam—from sources other than the media—and form their own opinions about the religion.

I do not want to be regarded with suspicion any more. I do not want to be issued threats through the internet. I do not want to be on the defensive about my religion.

I wrote this article because I wanted to share my personal experiences about being a young Muslim in America, even if my experiences don't apply to other young Muslims. I wrote this article because I understand why many Americans look at Islam with disdain.

I know that most modern-day terrorists are Muslims, even if most modern-day Muslims aren't terrorists. Most Muslims, contrary to popular belief, advocate peace and condemn terrorist actions. This truth, however, is not enough to convince the general public that the actions of a few should not define an entire population. --*Hamna Qureshi*

"I do not want to be regarded with suspicion any more. I do not want to be issued threats through the internet. I do not want to be on the defensive about my religion."

HAMNA QURESHI (12)

Hamna Qureshi (12) wears a personal headscarf. Although she does not wear the hijab regularly, she feels the piece brings indefinite beauty and confidence.

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PHOTO BY TESSA VIRGILIO

Assistant Superintendent hired

Dr. Lynn Simmers to take over position from Dr. Phil Downs for 2014-15

By Tessa Virgilio
News Writer

The 2014-15 school year will carry the initiation of a new Southwest Allen County Schools (SACS) district employee. Effective July 1, Dr. Lynn Simmers will step foot into the SACS administration offices as assistant superintendent. Many teachers and administrators are familiar with her work and anticipate her arrival as a beneficial addition to the district's staff.

For the last five years, Dr. Steve Yager served as the superintendent of SACS district and is now retiring. In the coming school year, Dr. Phil Downs, current assistant superintendent, will fill Yager's position, thus opening the assistant superintendent spot. After interviewing for the position, Simmers was widely accepted by the staff for her many visions and ambitions for SACS.

"I feel very blessed to be given the opportunity to become part of the SACS leadership team," Simmers said in an email. "I'm looking forward to serving the staff, students and parents of Southwest Allen and developing strong working relationships to ensure our students receive quality learning experiences each and every day."

When she joins SACS, Simmers will be parting with Dekalb County Schools, where she currently serves as the assistant superintendent.

"I have some friends who have children at Dekalb, and they were sorry to see her go," Michelle

▶ SEE 'SUPERINTENDENT,' PAGE 2

AP tests cause stress for students

By Tatum Ellis
News Writer

As May approaches, the number of students clutching Princeton Review books and chattering nervously about the latest round of assignments is at an all-time high. Although the end of the year still seems far away, the dates of the Advanced Placement exams are quickly approaching—and with this year's "snowpacolypse," the time that students have in school to prepare for the tests has been significantly reduced, adding even more stress to an already nerve racking time.

Because the scores of AP tests are not reported for several months after the exam is taken, it is impossible for teachers to use the AP test as a course's final exam. This means that in addition to the looming test date, students also have to cope with quickly approaching finals in each of their AP classes.

Although the concept of having two monumental exams may seem daunting, most students are more concerned with the AP test. Nevertheless, the grade that appears on each student's transcript is not impacted by their score on the AP exam: instead it is affected by their performance on each class's final. This policy places students in the middle of a time management balancing act, as they must doubly prepare for their finals and AP tests.

Although AP classes are decidedly more rigorous than their standard-level counterparts, the degree of difficulty varies among them.

"AP World (History) was definitely the hardest class I've had to take, because it's a huge time span to cover in a short amount of time," Clayton McClain (12) said. "I'm in AP Psychology and AP Statistics right now, and those are pretty

▶ SEE 'AP TESTING,' PAGE 2

PHOTO BY TESSA VIRGILIO

Teacher of the year Cassandra Yarian works with various students, such as Robert Miller(above) in Special Education. She was informed of the honor on April 14.

Cassandra Yarian honored for work in Special Education Department

By Tessa Virgilio
News Editor

The arrival of spring means numerous things: showers, flowers and superpowers. Perhaps not superpowers, but it surely was empowering for Cassandra Yarian, special needs teacher, to learn of her selection as Teacher of the Year. She will be recognized further in the teacher appreciation program and may possibly acquire a district, state or even national title.

Each year, each faculty member has the opportunity to nominate one colleague who has demonstrated his or her ability to perform beyond the basic teaching duties. After teacher nominations come in through email, the administration and previous Teacher of the Years ultimately choose the final Teacher of the Year. Yarian did not expect to be awarded, and was flattered to have been chosen among her peers.

"I was very shocked, and I was definitely very humbled and honored," Yarian said. "I wasn't expecting it at all. I really couldn't have anticipated it in any way."

The award means to Yarian what it signifies to any dedicated educator- that she is where she wants and needs to be.

"I think that the award is really just an affirmation that I am working hard, and sometimes it's easy to feel as though we're hidden away in our own world (in the special needs department), (but receiving the award shows) we're not that hidden and people do see the work that's being done," Yarian said. "So it's very encouraging and it just felt great."

The award was announced on April 14 when a mysterious meeting was called after school by principal Park Ginder. The teachers were asked to stay after school on a day that made up for snow days.

"I almost didn't even go to the meeting," Yarian said. "Mr. Ginder came in to make sure that we were going to go and so when I got there, it was announced."

Teachers who work in close proximity to Yarian acknowledge that she is most deserving of the honor this year and has worked her way towards it since she began teaching with the school.

"I believe Mrs. Yarian was a perfect fit for the teacher of the year award," Rachel Radloff, special needs teacher, said. "My entire teaching career I have been co-teaching with her and I have always felt that she deserved recognition for the love and dedication she puts into loving and teaching her students. She has always gone above and beyond, which I believe makes her the perfect candidate for the award."

As of this year, Yarian's

▶ SEE 'TEACHER,' PAGE 2

Turf repairs to be completed

Football, band fields among district-wide summer repairs

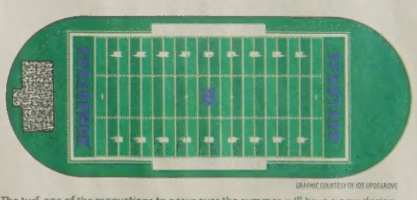
By Kelly Asiala
News Writer

Due to bad drainage and 10 years of wear and tear, the turf on the football field is being replaced. In addition to fresh turf, several other projects will take place this summer.

After years of being accustomed to the latest technology, the football field turf is being replaced with some of the best field technology in existence. Over time, the turf was worn down, but turf engineers have learned from their mistakes and will make improvements on quality. The new football field will have an improved draining system, which will create a safer environment for the athletes.

There is a blanket underneath the turf panels that helps drain the field. The disintegrating blanket will be improved in the new, technically advanced drainage system.

"That blanket is disintegrating and creating hazards for anyone who uses (the football field)," Joe Updegrove, athletic director, said.



GRAPHIC COURTESY OF JOE UPDEGROVE

The turf, one of the renovations to occur over the summer, will have a new design.

▶ SEE 'TURF,' PAGE 2

BRIEFS

PROM GUEST FORMS
Any junior or senior who is requesting to bring a guest(who is not a Homestead High School student) to the prom, must pick up a request form form the Discipline Office. This form must be completed and returned to the Discipline Office no later than May 9. Don't delay- Pick one up today!

IVY TECH DUAL CREDIT EXAM
All students needing to take the Ivy Tech Dual Credit Entrance Exam may take the exam on May 6. This will be the last Dual Credit Entrance Exam of the year. You must be signed up to take this last exam by the end of the day today. Signups for this exam can be found in Student Services.

SPRING MUSICAL
Performances of this year's musical, The Music Man, are Friday and Saturday, May 2 and 3 at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, May 4 at 2:00 p.m. Tickets are $5 for students and $8 for adults. Tickets are being sold during all lunches through Friday, May 4 and will also be available at the door.

Five students attend Regional science fair

By Ethan Zweig
Copy Editor

Five students attended the Hoosier Regional Science and Engineering Fair at IPFW on the first weekend in April. Their projects rethink the boundaries of modern-day science and attempt to improve medicine and treatments for various health issues.

Students who attended the fair were Hussain Habib (12), Rutva Shah (12), Fahad Hasnain (11), Puneeth Meruva (11) and Sangjun Park (11), according to Matt Elder, Science Department chair.

The event attracted students from all over Indiana. Competitors ranged from third-graders to seniors in high school. The wide variety of interests and goals created an exhilarating feeling amongst the attendees.

"(During this time,) I met with two different kinds of judges: the placement judges and the specialty judges," Shah said. "The placement judges determined our overall judging to move onto state and the specialty judges came from national and international organizations and companies. I gave my presentation approximately 12 times. While presenting may sound tiring, it was actually a really fruitful (experience) to see all the work put into the project come together."

▶3,000
students attend Intel ISEF every year.

Each student conducted a science fair project, which had been worked on over the course of the past few months. The projects involved current issues in society or medicine, and the experiments suggested options to revolutionize and improve those areas through inventions, robots, mixtures, compounds and new perspectives on problems.

"For my research I worked with Azadirachta indica, a substance from a tropical herb," Shah said. "I was able to deduce that, because many deadly bacterial strains are becoming resistant to antibiotic medicines, (this herb), with its multifaceted medicinal properties, may hold the key to a new inexpensive

▶ SEE 'FAIR,' PAGE 2

▶SUPERINTENDENT CONTINUED FROM 1

Bollman, Spanish teacher, said. "They felt like she had done a really good job at Dekalb and they knew her as a parent as well and felt like she was very friendly and approachable."

Simmers, who has 16 years of administrative experience as an assistant principal, athletic director, summer school program coordinator, principal and assistant superintendent, has a daughter who will enroll in SACS. As an administrator and as a mother, she will experience the increasing technology-based learning aspect of the district.

"I'm excited about joining an organization that is willing to dare greatly and embrace technology as a means of seeing and creating the future of education," Simmers said in an email. "As a parent, I'm thrilled that my daughter will be given the opportunity to thrive in the amazing learning culture that's been created for students (within SACS)."

Acquaintances of Simmers agree that she possesses an influential go-getter attitude. She has been able to move tech extension developments forward, facilitate curriculum alignment in grades 6-12 and provide help in rebranding elementary schools with Dekalb; these projects demonstrate her initiative vision.

"She's a perfect fit for us because of the innovative things that SACS is involved in," Park Ginder, principal, said. "We wanna (sic) create an educational environment that is the best thing for kids and that's what she's all about."

Simmers names strong values and goals as motivation and fuel for her passion for administration in public schools. She stresses the importance of the next generation and her role in creating leaders and prepping the student body to be 21st century learners.

"My goals are to be uncompromising in my quest for quality educational opportunities for all students; inspire greatness by actively contributing to the success and excellence that's been achieved by the district, and devote my time and energy to being a 'forward' thinker, effective communicator and creative problem solver," Simmers said in an email.

As assistant superintendent, Simmers will hold many responsibilities that are typically associated with curriculum, instruction and assessment, instructional practices and the different ways the district assesses or evaluates students' knowledge and understanding.

"The assistant superintendent does help set a lot of vision for the corporation," Ginder said. "The assistant superintendent helps to work with grants. Also, (she) has some responsibilities that kind of mirror what a principal does in a school, but she will be thinking much larger than just a single school."

The SACS community is enthusiastic to welcome such an advocate for learning, and hopes to see Simmers flourish in her future plans and ideas to benefit the district.

"I hope she finds (SACS district) as friendly and as welcoming as I have found it to be," Bollman said. "I hope that she feels as embraced as I have felt to be here."

▶FAIR CONTINUED FROM 1

antibacterial treatment for the strains that have become resistant to their previous treatment. This would allow for pharmaceutical companies to effectively tackle deadly strains in a more natural and less harmful method."

One student among the five, Meruva, won third place among the junior students at the event and qualified to compete in the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair.

"My project dealt with snake robots," Meruva said. "Robotic snakes can traverse through tightly-packed volumes very easily, making them an ideal solution for search and rescue and surgery applications. However, these robots are very difficult to control, meaning that when used in high-pressure situations, human error is very likely. To eliminate this human error, I developed a self-operated control scheme for snake robots that removes human intervention entirely."

Meruva's project can also help rescue missions.

"By making snake robots much more efficient and consistent, these systems can then be used as tools," Meruva said. "Within the realm of search and rescue, these robots will help rescue workers communicate with trapped people much quicker than they can now. Similarly, snake robots with my novel control scheme will be used for minimally invasive surgery, reducing patient trauma, hospital stays and cost for both the patient and the hospital itself."

The Intel ISEF will be held this year in Los Angeles on May 11-16. More than 3,000 students attend the event every year.

"I will definitely be going to the (Intel ISEF) this year," Meruva said. "I am really looking forward to learning about many different innovative projects, meeting lots of new students and highly-qualified professionals from around the world, enjoying a week in L.A., and hopefully winning some awards."

▶TURF CONTINUED FROM 1

It is expected that work on the new turf will begin by the end of May. The school board and construction companies have to wait to begin this work until the track and field seasons taper off, because athletes cannot use the track while work on the turf is being completed.

Including four other projects taking place over the summer, the total cost will come to $1,209,000. The money that will be used to pay for these projects comes from district-issued bonds, according to Jim Coplen, SACS district business manager. The costs of the new turf and additional projects included in this bid have not created any budget cuts elsewhere, according to Updegrove.

A recent study in New Jersey was conducted on the safety of turf fibers. The new field upgrade will contain less lead in turf fibers and better safety, according to usafootball.com.

"I think it's going to benefit all athletes," Greg Gehl, football coach, said. "Fortunately we live and work in a community where the community supports the school and (has) a great facility."

The newest type of turf on the market is called infilled synthetic turf because of the crumb rubber. The crumb rubber fill is made out of recycled car and truck tires, according to usafootball.com.

The average cost for a field drainage base, beneath the turf blanket, is four dollars per square foot, according to fieldturf.com. Each drainage base should last between 20 and 30 years, which is equal to the life span of two or three turf fields. After construction of the drainage base, turf panels are placed and filling materials are layered into the carpet to help create balanced footing and a safety net from the concrete from the drainage base below.

Looking at the new designs for the football field, the grass coloration will be slightly different than what Spartan fans are accustomed to. Between the yard lines, the shades of grass will alternate between shades of light and dark green. There will be a blue "H" on the 50-yard line, and a new stadium entrance is being constructed to accompany the new turf. On the north end zone, the word "Homestead" will be printed in blue, and on the south end zone it will read "Spartans."

In addition to the new football turf, the school board has elected to complete a number of other needed projects. These include a new band tower, band turf (to be located at the current practice field), band lights and resurfacing of the high school track. Also, both of the middle school tracks are being resurfaced due to excessive years of use.

The renewed turf will be an upgrade from the current football field, and the athletic coaches are looking forward to the renovation.

HOMESTEAD DEBUNKED

Rumor: Books are going to be replaced by technology.
Status: False.

Books come up for review by each department every six years. The departments that come up for review this year are the upper levels of foreign language and English.

"What we're doing now, because of one to one, is taking it on a course by course basis," Susan Summers, vice principal, said. "We are looking to see if there are web-based resources online, then we go through a process of vetting those."

There has been no school wide decree stating books will be eliminated, but many classes will not have textbooks. Some teachers may choose to keep their old ones as a class set. Moving to online resources for some classes possesses many advantages to the curriculum that can be covered.

"(By online sources) you are using the most current materials," Summers said, "so you're not stuck with a textbook to use the full six years. The things that are online tend to be a lot more interactive."

Online sources in place of textbooks are not ideal for all classes because much of the textbook material is difficult to replace.

"We are going to have to go out and find materials that are free or we are going to have to make them ourselves," Junior Stalley, math teacher, said. "My only concern is that it is going to be more time. You can find stuff, but it is the idea that we have to put it all together."

-Tessa Lutz

▶AP TESTING CONTINUED FROM 1

straightforward classes."

AP World History is commonly acknowledged as one of the more rigorous AP classes, which is slightly ironic, considering it is generally taken by freshman and sophomore students. Regardless of the relative difficulty of any AP class, the possibility of scoring lower than a three on the exam has prompted many students to opt for a dual credit opportunity through Ivy Tech or IPFW. This eliminates the chance that the time and energy spent in their respective class ends in a useless score on the test in May.

"I'm taking AP Psychology as dual credit, since that's an option this year," Hallie Nowak (11) said. "If I were taking the AP exam I'd probably be a lot more stressed about the class."

For those students who are choosing to take an AP exam for the first time, or considering it for next year, the most frequently repeated piece of advice is to relax.

"Just study what you have trouble with, and don't get too nervous before you take the test," James Rapoza (10) said.

This piece of advice is often cited by teachers as well, since nervousness often leads to second guessing and easily avoided mistakes.

At this time of year, many students attempting to prepare for the exams will turn to the after school study sessions that are being offered for nearly every AP class. The meetings attempt to refresh each student's memory for events taught to them as far back as August.

As an alternative or an addition to these review sessions, those who have taken AP exams in the past swear by methods of preparation ranging from flashcards to practice tests, with plenty of mnemonics in between. Regardless of each student's chosen way to cope with the stress of AP exams, the classes give them an invaluable step on their path to college readiness.

"No matter what AP class you take, you're always going to get a higher level of experience than if you'd taken regular," McClain said. "I'd definitely recommend it."

▶TEACHER CONTINUED FROM 1

teaching career will have spanned seven years, six of which were spent at Homestead. Her passion for special education took root at a young age, and it was not long until she knew she wanted to pursue work with special education students as a career.

"I started helping kids with special needs when I was young," Yarian said. "I would get done with assignments early and my teachers would pair me up with kids who needed extra help. From there, I just felt that God really put it in my heart, and I just constantly felt attracted to these kids and really wanted to be with them. This was (...) where my heart was at."

Yarian meets the criteria for Teacher of the Year on the dot, as the honor is given to a teacher who is exceptionally skilled and dedicated, respected by students, parents and colleagues and plays an active role in the community and school, according to Radloff.

Yarian is currently working on the application she will send in to apply for SACS district Teacher of the Year. The teacher awarded in the district level will progress onto state, and finally to nationals.

"In and out of the classroom, Mrs. Yarian is mission-driven for her students," Lindsay Wolf, special needs department chairperson, said. "Whether in the classroom, at a meeting or extracurricular event, she is advocating for learners."

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Staff members support the First Amendment in its entirety and oppose censorship in any form. The content of the paper is determined by the student staff. In cases of potentially controversial material, the Editorial Board will meet to decide the content of the newspaper. The staff will be assisted by the adviser in areas of professional ethics and legalities.

Material that is libelous or obscene as defined by Fort Wayne Newspapers or could cause a substantial and material disruption of the school day as defined by the Supreme Court will not be printed.

Southwest Allen County corporation encourages vigorous treatment of a wide range of subject matter, including controversial issues and student journalists are free to report and to editorialize on events, ideas, and issues in their high school, community, nation and world according to Policy Number 4150.

Public input will be accepted from the Homestead community in the form of letters to the editor. Letters must follow standards concerning libel or obscenity. Those that could cause a substantial and material disruption to the school day will not be printed. Letters can be e-mailed to The Spartana at thespartana@gmail.com

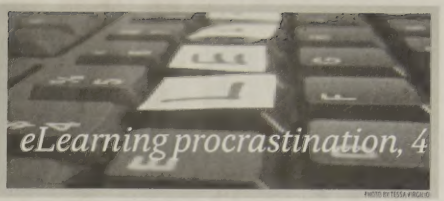

PHOTO BY TESSA KRUGER

LEFT AND WRITE: Online textbooks integrated in classes

eTextbooks proven economic and convenient

By Katie Dunlap
Editor-in-Chief

Many departments are considering using online textbooks instead of the traditional hardback texts. While no department has officially decided to move online, there are a multitude of benefits in utilizing this format. As technology continues to progress and become increasingly prevalent in everyday life, the replacement of hard-back textbooks for online texts, or eTextbooks, makes sense for schools throughout the country.

The modern world gravitates towards relying more on computers for both research and entertainment purposes. The advancements in technology in just the past 10 years alone show this is only the beginning of the integration of electronics into daily life.

> "Shifting from traditional textbooks to digital resources will be a beneficial, natural progression."
>
> **KATIE DUNLAP**

One of the major advantages of online textbooks is their accessibility. Going digital enables students to view material on multiple devices, depending upon where the student chooses to do their work. Also, students will no longer have to carry around their textbooks in order to utilize them during one class. Several textbooks would be stored on one device: the student's laptop.

The content and layout of the hardback textbooks translates to online books, though with added features to enable learning in individualized ways. Students can contain their notes in one place, as well as search for particular sections with ease. Other features such as electronically highlighting important text can aid in note taking. Interactive additions could include audio, animations and links to information. These would be helpful for students with different learning styles, such as visual or auditory learners, to comprehend the lessons taught to them in class.

Using digital resources will also be beneficial because, after years of use, textbooks often become damaged. Whether former students wrote answers in the book or they are simply a bit worn, the quality of online textbooks remains constant, and content within the text is recent.

Because each student already has a school laptop, the transition to online textbooks would not make a huge impact on them. The students are familiar with the way the technology works and are very capable of adapting to online textbooks. Also, eTextbooks will better prepare students for post-secondary education since digital texts are being utilized often for college classes.

While increasing the use of technology in classrooms through the purchase of online textbooks is beneficial for students, it may not work for every class. Like any other new program, teachers might need to be trained and students would need to adjust to finding their textbooks online instead of on their bookshelves; however, the positive aspects of online textbooks outweigh the drawbacks. Integration of textbooks on an online platform not only represents the future of education, but is also a necessary learning tool for schools throughout the country. The Southwest Allen County School District has already learned how to navigate eLearning, 1:1 computing and MyBigCampus, so using online textbooks seems to be a logical step in the direction of the future.

Hardback texts necessary to productive learning

By Kylie Poling
Opinion Editor

In this digital age, there is an ever-present push to use technology for everything possible, something which will be pursued in the forthcoming 2014-15 school year; however, it is sometimes best to forego technology, a principle which holds true in the case of online textbooks.

Online textbooks are revered for their environmentally-friendliness and portability, among other factors. These benefits are proven obsolete, though, when their negative effects are taken into account.

Foremost, it should be addressed that online textbooks are not more green than print textbooks. For example, the manufacturing of a single tablet, which could house the textbooks, "requires the extraction of 33 pounds of minerals, 79 gallons of water and 100 kilowatt hours of fossil fuels resulting in 66 pounds of carbon dioxide," whereas "print books produce 100 times fewer greenhouse gases" and only use "two gallons of water" to make paper, according to tablets-textbooks.procon.org.

Additionally, online textbooks can be unreliable. As students and teachers experience over the eLearning snow makeup day March 12 (check date), technology can be unpredictable at best. Digital devices, laptops, tablets, iPads, digital readers and cell phones included, are all prone to viruses, among other malfunctions, and usually do not hold enough of a battery charge to last through an entire school day.

As observed with the initiation of 1:1 computing, a significant number of students cite technology problems in many scenarios. "My wifi was out." "I lost my charger." "My hard drive crashed." Everyone has used, or at least heard, those phrases or variations of them at some point or another this school year, and by exclusively transitioning into only online textbooks, it only makes sense that more of these excuses will be heard in excess.

It is also important to note the health risks associated with digital textbooks. Computer vision syndrome (CVS) poses a dangerous threat to developing eyes. CVS is caused by the strain on the eyes which reading from a digital screen creates, a concern which would only grow in students and teachers with the use of online textbooks.

Besides these obvious detriments, there is also the fact that some students would simply rather hold a textbook in their hands, flip the pages themselves and view a physical copy of a text than rely on its digital counterpart. Not to mention students would have to memorize passwords and deal with program crashes, while teachers would likely have to adapt their teaching to different versions of textbooks. These inconveniences would create a lot of unnecessary strain for all.

If Homestead does take advantage of the digital media available, print versions of textbooks should be available to those who would prefer them.

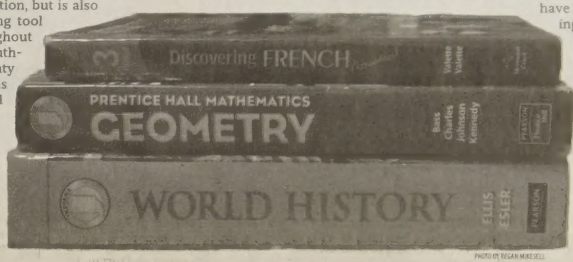

PHOTO BY MEGAN MAESELL

Teens' digital presence acts as reflection of self

Sharing of inappropriate messages, photos and videos harmful to all parties

By Katie Maher
Business Manager

Especially prevalent among today's teens is the importance of maintaining a positive digital presence. Although it is often preached by parents to their children to "be careful what you send and what you put online; it will stay forever," kids are still choosing to ignore the warning out of ignorance and a dangerous "it won't happen to me" attitude.

Just like rumors, inappropriate texts, videos and photographs can spread quickly, but are additionally capable of spreading to anyone, anywhere. The difference between a rumor and a chain of texts or online material is that with texts or online content, there is physical evidence present to support any potential claims, evidence which will never simply "go away" or be forgotten. Before pressing send or submit, kids need to think more carefully about the consequences of how they choose to use their smartphones and other digital devices.

When someone chooses to send a risky picture, video or text, the event is occurring in the absence of good judgement. Everyone should be vigilant in protecting his or her own safety and integrity, as well as others'. Someone who receives inappropriate content of another person needs to act wisely by not forwarding the content to other people, but instead delete it. This is for the well-being of the person in the picture or the video, despite whether the content was supposed to be shared or not.

Even if people choose to ignore and delete, that does not justify the sharing of inappropriate pictures, footage or messages. Not only is it illegal to sext or send sexually explicit content as a minor since it is considered child pornography, but choosing to associate with and participate in such activities devalues one's self.

In many cases, with girls especially, teenagers send risky content of themselves to their significant others or someone whom they are trying to impress. The recipient of the photo or video may show it to a friend, or it may be a cold-hearted leak released to devalue the sender's integrity.

What is sad about these cases is that the general public tends to just blame the person in the photo and totally forget someone else is also responsible for the release of the content. Obviously, it was irresponsible of the content's creator to take and send the content in the first place, but the person in the photo or video is not the only one at fault.

Anyone who perpetuates the situation by sharing the leaked media to more people is also at fault. People forwarding the blackmail are doing exactly what the point source person wanted, which is to shame and embarrass the originator of the content. Taking the photo or video was wrong, but nobody deserves that amount of shame. Taking part in publicly humiliating a person is just as shameful as being the person of conversation in this case.

Of course, a degrading situation can be avoided. It is everyone's responsibility to stop defamation in its tracks through preventative as well as preemptive measures. It does not matter how close the relationship feels. A relationship that includes feeling pressured to send such content should be cut off quickly. Other sexting routes like Snapchat or KiK messenger need to be used appropriately, too, as do any other social media forums. How we use technology can reveal our own self-worth and can also reveal how we allow others to treat us, so use it wisely as an extension of your best self.

CARTOON BY KENDAL PAUL

twitter take

The Spartana attempts to capture the most impulsive responses on Twitter.

@TheSpartana

Question: "What's the best way to procrastinate doing eLearning?"

@_cGAR_ - Caleb Gardner (12) ▶ "by never doing it, elearning = ejoke."

@BabyBerghoff - Sarah Berghoff (12) ▶ "naps, lots of naps."

@cupoffrESHCOFFee - Timothy Eshcoff (12) ▶ "just don't do it because you're a senior #senioritis."

@xstrangebrewx - Keller O'Leary(11) ▶ "By using any other homework due sooner as an excuse to procrastinate both."

@KelseyHerber - Kelsey Herber (9) ▶ "reply to The Spartana's tweets."

Tanning poses dangerous threat

Teens should be mindful of harmful ultraviolet ray exposure

By Colby Shoup
Multimedia Manager

After a relaxing spring break away from Fort Wayne weather, many students have come back to school with a popular, yet potentially dangerous look: a tan. First skyrocketed into the mainstream by fashion designer CoCo Chanel in 1923, tanning has since become a commonplace look for young people and a sought after accessory on the typical American vacation despite the countless studies denouncing it as a hazardous habit. This raises the question: is temporary glowing skin worth the enormous risk?

As it turns out, many Americans who tan take the proper precautions and apply sunscreen before tanning. In fact, a recent ABC News poll showed that 69 percent of Americans report occasionally using sunscreen, while only 31 percent of Americans report never using it. Breanna Royal (10), who went tanning frequently during her spring break, is one of the cautious majority of Americans. "I just put SPF 50 sunscreen on all week and reapplied throughout the day," Royal said.

Cautious tanners like Royal prove most of the American tanning culture is quite responsible, and as a result, they believe they can enjoy the cosmetic benefits, as well as the significant exposure to Vitamin D, which helps the human body absorb calcium and promote bone growth, that comes with tanning.

Despite people like Royal, 90 percent of skin cancer cases were caused by exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun or from tanning beds, and although an aforementioned 69 percent of people reportedly use sunscreen, they may not be using a sufficiently protective type or amount of sunscreen.

According to a study conducted in 2011 by The Environmental Working Group, spray-on sunscreen is largely ineffective in protecting the skin from UV rays, and the American Dermatology Association claims that it is important to apply sun screen 20 to 30 minutes before being exposed to large amounts of UV light. It is also important to reapply the sunscreen roughly every two hours while being exposed to UV rays. If these precautions are not taken, there may be fatal consequences, such as cancer.

Tanning is the most common cause of skin cancer, a condition which one in five Americans will suffer from in their lifetimes. More specifically, tanning causes melanoma, the most deadly type of cancer, which kills an average of one person every hour. Using tanning beds also causes melanoma in the eyes, which can lead to lifelong blindness and even death, and a variety of other less dangerous but still serious eye-related health issues.

Along with these health issues, tanning can also cause pre mature aging, a permenant cosmetic problem which may cause teens to rethink their favorite hobby.

Tanning is not nearly as dangerous as it used to be when it was first made popular, but that doesn't mean tanning is still not dangerous and potentially life threatening. It would be difficult to stop people from tanning in natural sunlight, since it would be near impossible to ban sunlight, and humans need vitamin D to stay healthy. However, banning tanning beds would be much easier to enforce and would be more justified as they emit, on average, three times more UV than the sun does, making them much more dangerous. Although tanning in the sun on occasion is acceptable and not deadly, tanning too much in the sun and using tanning beds just to look more appealing is not worth the risks.

PHOTO BY MEGAN BUTLER

Hiking gives time to contemplate life

JESS SAYIN'

BY JESSICA TEBBEN
Life Editor

I recently had the opportunity to hike four miles up a mountain and then four miles back down. And by opportunity, I mean I was basically forced to hike this mountain. Of course, hiking gave me a lot of time to contemplate life, nature, how much my legs hurt and how sunburnt I was probably getting. I didn't get sunburnt, but I did compile a list of things to think about if you are ever forced to hike up a dangerously rocky mountain path in the Californian heat. Or if you ever have the opportunity to do something similar.

At the beginning of the hike, you're obviously going to be feeling great so you might as well think about how out of shape you are because you know how awful you're going to feel later. You're going to be feeling those cheeseburgers holding you down in a few minutes anyway, so you might as well start worrying about it now. If you ever run out of things to think about, come back to your failing physical health because you will be reminded of it every time you stop to catch your breath.

As you ascend the mountain, you can occupy yourself with thoughts of how the landscape is changing. Notice that every time you have to stop because you feel like your throat is on fire, there's a brand new view of all the same rocks. Think about how that rock turned out looking like a hippopotamus or a turtle. How is that rock still standing upright? I don't know, but it's something to think about as you burn in the sun.

Think about some other things that will distract you from the cramp in your side. Like what your YouTube channel would be called if you ever made one. Think about ways to become internet famous because we all know that is everyone's goal. Or just think about people who are already internet famous and steal all their ideas. Except don't actually do that because it's not cool to take other peoples' ideas unless they tell you it's cool. Then you can go ahead. But since they probably won't, you can wallow in your non-internet famous sadness on the way up the mountain.

One great thing to do is count how long each break lasts. As you climb the mountain, you're probably going to stop more because it sure isn't going to get any easier to hike. And once you stop, it gets harder to start back up. Maybe you'll just end up staying in one spot on the path all day before you realize you have to go the remainder of the way up, or at least go back down to the bottom.

It's probably a good idea to think about drinking a lot of water, too. Being dehydrated with no way out is not fun when climbing a mountain.

When you're at the top, just enjoy the view! Unless you're blacking out from lack of oxygen. Then you should probably put your head between your knees or something.

When it's time for the descent, just think about how hungry you are and how much you have to go to the bathroom. Drink enough water, but don't drink too much if you know what I mean.

At the bottom of the mountain, congratulate yourself for still being alive, maybe kiss the level ground or something weird like that. Think about how much you want to take a nap but can't because where are you going to take a nap? In the dirt? You're dirty enough so you might as well.

Although you only want to take a nap and eat greasy food at this point, you should also be thankful for the opportunity to hike up a steep and dangerously rocky mountain because it provides for a great story later. Even though you almost died, enjoy yourself. You don't get to hike up a mountain everyday.

Business club membors excel

DECA participants advance to travel to internationls in May

BY AWBREI VACHON
Life Writer

After months of planning and preparing papers and presentations, students involved in the school's DECA program are nearing the homestretch. With internationals just around the corner, students hope to impress the judges enough to make it in the top five of whichever category they are in.

Preceding internationals is first districts, followed by a state competition. Districts is generally very low key and quick, for which students are allowed to miss two full days of school for state. In order to make it to internationals, one must place in the top three of the category.

Once internationals comes along, everyone has his or her game face on, and is ready to come home with a win.

TJ Bishop (10) already has some experience of internationals from last year, where he competed in the Professional Selling category.

"(It) is extremely stressful," Bishop said. "You see guys preparing for presentations, doing homework and studying for finals for when they get back to school."

Within the allotted week DECA students are at the international competition in Atlanta, they will be trying to manage both a respectable presentation and school work from back home. They will be allowed, however, to have a little fun.

Students will be able take a couple days out of the week to do things including visiting the Georgia Aquarium, attending an Atlanta Braves baseball game, attempting to get tickets for a Vampire Weekend and Arcade Fire concert and going to Six Flags for an evening.

"It's a great experience for high schoolers," Christina Jesse (11) said. "It's educational as well as fun."

DECA's mission is to prepare emerging leaders and entrepreneurs in marketing, hospitality and management, according to DECA's website, and doing so has an impact on students' lives.

"I've been actually considering business as a possible future now," Jesse said. "I never thought I would, but DECA has kind of opened my eyes to see the potential that I may have in the business world."

On the other side of the spectrum, Fahad Hasnain (11) has applied things he has learned from school to DECA instead of applying knowledge gained from DECA to school or life. Classes have helped him apply ideas of decision making to his group's presentation, which earned second place out of 25 in the state competition.

"It was my first year," Hasnain said. "We worked hard on our paper and on our presentation as well; it (has been) a good experience."

Given that Hasnain's group member Ben Dvorak (11) has previously attended internationals, they had valuable insight into what exactly the judges are looking for and what to expect of the competition in general.

PHOTO COURTESY OF JACK SIMS

Many DECA participants placed, allowing them to go to internationals.

"(Our) category was Advertising Campaign, and in that category we had to write an 11-page paper, and we had to do a presentation and take a test," Hasnain said. "(And Ben) was kind of a leader in a sense for our group."

Students are able to choose any category offered to them through the program, as well as whether to complete the project individually or as part of a group. Either way, DECA provides students with a wonderful opportunity.

"I know that if I want a career in sales, I'm going to be good at what I do," Bishop said. "DECA gives me the real world business scenarios that we aren't exposed to in high school. It gives me confidence for my career."

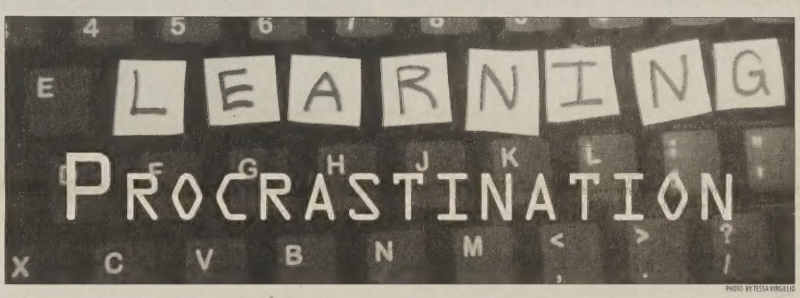

PHOTO BY TESSA VIRGALLO

eLearning procrastination has been creeping upon students as they avoid confronting their computers and the digital assignments they contain.

eLearning brings out students' worst time management skills

BY MALLORY MCCAULEY
Online Editor

To add on to the many pressures school naturally brings, students are now facing the struggle of keeping up with their eLearning. This pressure ultimately pushes many students into finishing an eLearning assignment the night before it's due simply because they frankly do not want to want to confront more homework early.

"Procrastination is just something that happens to everyone," Ethan Pappas (10) said. "Unfortunately, we all tend to leave work until the last minute instead of dividing it out and using our time effectively."

eLearning was designed so each assignment, according to the given set schedule, would take a class period amount of time to finish. However, because each student works at his or her own pace and also learns at different paces, many students may not need a full 45 minutes to complete the assignment, thus showing that procrastination of certain eLearning assignments may not be all that bad.

"A lot of my eLearning will only take me about 20 minutes to complete, so I've never really run in to any problems with doing my eLearning," Maddie Doerffler (10) said.

Teachers often extend their eLearning due dates to allow more time for completion if the assignment is a longer project, requiring more than one class period worth of time to complete. This is where the problems come into play because the student mindset that "I will have plenty of time to do this; it's three weeks away" begins to hinder motivation, resulting in procrastination to the night before the due date.

"It is hard to sit down and have the motive to actually do (the longer projects) because no one wants to do it, so if you gradually do it throughout (the allotted time), it will be better," Doerffler said.

Making a spread-out schedule and dividing an eLearning assignment in to smaller portions may be easy, but often times, carrying that plan out is what proves most difficult.

"Because teachers are aware of our procrastination when we are overwhelmed, they give us extra time (to complete the assignment)," Amanda Hayes (11) said. "This doesn't teach us time management skills."

Procrastination is not necessarily ineffective, it is just less efficient than spreading out the assignment. This drives students to procrastinate because they can be eLearning-free for a number of days. Because not everyone takes all of the different classes on the eLearning calendar schedule, there is often a period of time in which students will have no eLearning due, giving them a break in their "procrastination schedule."

"In one week, I only have two classes worth of eLearning due, and most of the time, my teachers extend their deadlines so I have even less homework," Hayes said. "This makes it really easy on me, and procrastinating doesn't really hurt much."

If done wisely, procrastinating may not be the worst decision a student could make, but rather a rational solution to the situation in which students are drowning in homework and only want to finish additional assignments when they have to. If completing the assignment on the night before is plausible, then the same is gained from each situation: the student completes his or her assignment on time.

"My thought process, along with many other students, is that if an eLearning assignment will only take 20 minutes to do, I'm not going to do it on the other nights when I have a ton of other homework," Doerffler said. "I'm going to wait until the night before when I absolutely have to do it."

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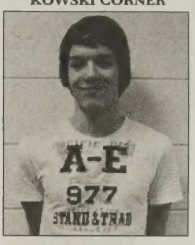
Fans should relinquish anger towards sport club "traitors"

The season has just finished, and players walk out of the locker room for the last time until next fall, hanging up their boots for the time being and taking a much-needed break from competing in sport. However, inside professional sport clubs, the next season has already begun.

Improving a team's squad is primarily done during the offseason, a time to bring in new players and talents in order to gain an edge for next season. Established players are traded to more successful clubs, relative newcomers are bought in order to develop them for future greatness, and, unfortunately, beloved players of a club are bought by their fierce rivals.

Be it soccer, football or any other sport that uses a hefty checkbook to operate, "traitorous" deals are made every year as rival teams snub the talents of their enemies. Widely known transfer sagas, at least for soccer fans like myself, are ones such as Bayern Munich buying both Mario Götze and Robert Lewandowski from Borussia Dortmund, their main competitors and their classic rival. Luis Figo from Barcelona to Real Madrid, Ashley Cole from Arsenal to Chelsea, Andrea Pirlo from AC Milan to Juventus... the list goes on and on, but is it something fans should complain about?

'KOWSKI CORNER



BY ADAM SWIATKOWSKI
Sports Editor

Many questions are asked of a player's motivations to move to a bitter rival, but a question that most sport fans do not think to ask is whether these players deserve to be called a traitor.

After all, soccer is a business at the end of the day and playing soccer is a player's job, so if players want to move to a new club that offers them more money on a yearly basis, they and their agents should be free to make the decision.

The service of these players who abandon their club is an important factor to remember; I believe fans should be happy for their players in that they gained prominence and success in their parent club, and their service to the club should be what they are remembered for, rather than how they left the club.

Take the Götze and Lewandowski example, as together they formed part of a formidable attack famous across Europe; their elite level of play helped Dortmund beat their bitter rivals Bayern for two years, and took their club to the biggest stage in club football: the Champions League Final.

The two players' rise to prominence brought Dortmund prominence along with them, and in turn provided a substantial profit for a "smaller" team. Record transfers such as Cristiano Ronaldo and Gareth Bale's moves to Real Madrid (from their already-elite clubs) brought in 80 million British pounds and 100 million British pounds to their respective parent clubs.

Another consideration that should be brought up is the financial sensibility of transfers to rival clubs. As seen above, profit margins can be outrageous on a player, and so a team's management may see it necessary to sell their beloved players to maintain financial stability. As players begin to gain value in the market through slow improvement of their game at their parent club, other teams will begin seeking interest in order to acquire a better player.

"Fans need to understand that sport is a business and that change is necessary for the progress of sport."

ADAM SWIATKOWSKI

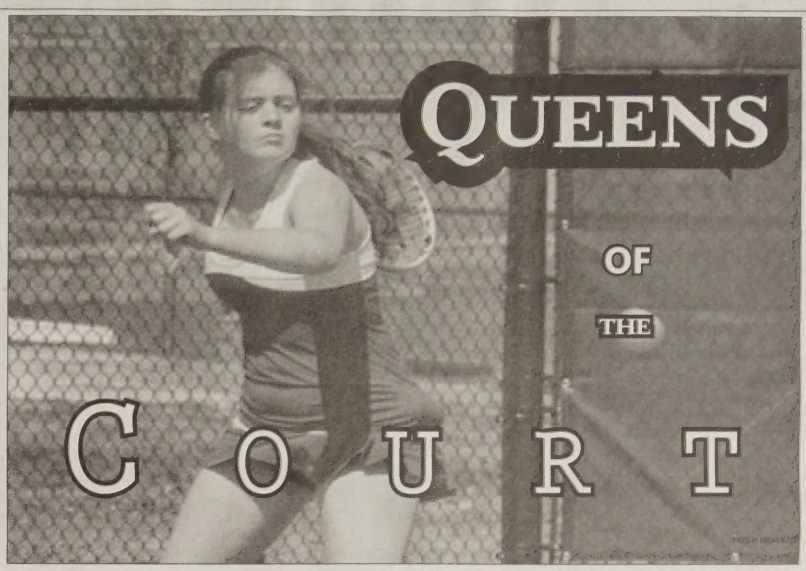
Many soccer leagues have clubs that serve as the training ground for such talent, allowing them time and developing them to become the stars of tomorrow; then, larger clubs, possibly including rivals, can buy those players. It is an apparent process for decades, with the likes of Arsenal and other English teams serving as feeder clubs to the prominent clubs like Manchester United or Chelsea.

It is inevitable for clubs to sell off these players, and if a rival is spending a considerable amount for the player, the parent club can use that profit to buy new players and begin the process over again.

Along with that financial sensibility comes a consideration of the player's usefulness and satisfaction at his parent club. Players who become underutilized and receive less playing time than they are used to, such as Juan Mata at Chelsea, may choose to depart to a prominent club and still receive the wages they desire along with playing football at an elite level.

These decisions may hurt the feelings of the fan base of the player's former club, but, ultimately, the players are the ones who should decide their playing careers, and should not receive unruly and unjust reactions for their decisions.

These players should not be considered a traitor by their fans. Fans need to understand that sport is a business and that change is necessary for the progress of sport, and their club can still reap the benefits of selling their famous players despite the departure of their skills. The memories of the player's time at the club should be savored and emphasized; it is what helped make their career in the first place.



Allison Partee (12) eyes a ball in order to return it to her opponent. Partee has been a member of the school tennis team throughout high school.

Girls tennis team gearing up for season of successful matches

BY ETHAN YDE
Writer

After two weeks of tryouts, the girls tennis team is back in swing with the season starting late in the month of April.

The girls are ready and willing to give it all they can and make this season one that will go down in history.

They must strive to achieve the multiple goals in areas of improvement that they outlined at the beginning of the year.

"Winning is a goal for the tennis team, but it is not the ultimate goal," Caitlin Nycum (10) said. "We are constantly trying to better our skills while having a good time with our teammates. I really enjoy having the support of other team members throughout matches and giving each other positive reinforcement."

This season started out just like any other: with tryouts.

However, there are about fifty girls on the team this year.

Out of these 50, seven make varsity, seven make the "blue" team, seven make the "gold" team while the rest are put on the "white" team.

How each girl plays in the tryouts determines how many games each girl gets to participate in during the regular season. Nonetheless, the four teams still practice together and support each other throughout the season.

"We always want to have a good season and have everyone play to their full potential," Jeff Stumpf, head coach, said. "We certainly want to compete well against other schools. This is my first year with the girls, so the biggest difference is learning to work with the girls instead of the guys, but I found out that the girls were just as excited as the guys to play tennis."

"We are constantly trying to better our skills while having a good time with our teammates."

CAITLIN NYCUM (10)

Excited is one way to describe it, but one may also say that these girls are motivated, dedicated and enthusiastic about doing well not only for themselves, but for their team.

The regular season will be filled with competition from within the conference. After the regular season, the most important time for the girls team takes place: the postseason.

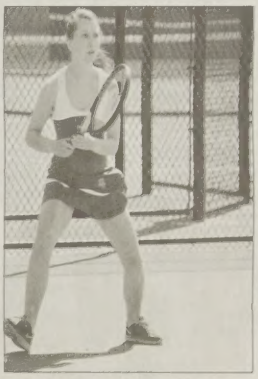
During the postseason, the girls will face the conference championships, and the highest ranking girls on the team will be sent to regionals and possibly a state match.

It is very important to the team to progress together and improve as a whole.

In order to be a strong team next year, the coaches look to find improvement in each girl every day. This way, the girls tennis team will continue to be a prestigious and important part of the school's athletics.

If the team can improve every year, the team will achieve in the postseason every year, so these goals go hand in hand.

"My personal goal for the season is to go undefeated in our conference, and the team's goal is to go as far as possible in the postseason," Andrea Stephens (12) said. "I think the team will improve most on the doubles courts because there are a lot of new girls playing doubles. I think the most exciting part is the postseason because everyone is playing their best and the matches are usually really close."



Shannon Nycum (12) prepapres to swing in her match.

Varsity baseball grabs new uniforms

Retro-inspired uniforms purchased with athletic department funding for baseball team

BY AUSTEN CUMMINGS
Writer

With a new season comes new expectations for the baseball team. Along with new expectations, there are new uniforms that were given to the team. Players on the team seem to like the new jerseys.

"I like the new jerseys because last year's did not fit me," Ben Schwartz (11) said. "I do like the design, they're fresh."

The hardest part about the new jerseys is finding the design, which is left up to Coach Nick Byall.

"The biggest thing for us is just if the material is going to last or not," Byall said, "The new uniforms are like the old retro (Houston) Astros' uniforms, that's where the design came from. I had seen other jerseys like that at Louisville and we looked to see if we could get something like that the guys would like that would be not too expensive. We found them at a decent price because of the new technology that they can use."

With the new uniforms, there had to be some source of money to come in to purchase them. The source of money comes from the athletic department funds.

"Every few years there is a uniform rotation, so what happens is after every few years goes by when the uniforms are getting older, we rotate them down so the varsity got new uniforms, and the old jerseys get moved down to the JV, and then the JV goes down to the freshmen team," Byall said.

Even though the coach may look for the jerseys and the designs for them, the players are the ones who end up playing in the uniforms and being seen in them.

With his last season as a Spartan, Tyler Zimske (12) gets to have his last season in the new uniforms.

PHOTO BY REAGAN MIKESELL

Kyle Mohsenzadeh (12) takes off towards home plate in an old uniform. This is Mohsenzadeh's fourth year on the team.

"I'm a big fan of the new jerseys," Zimske said, "We got one new blue away jersey and a white one with blue stripes. The white one is a Homestead version of the jerseys the University of Louisville received for the College World Series last year. The only thing that would make the jerseys better would be a pair of blue or white stirrups."

Sometimes a new addition to a team may bring excitement and better play, but sometimes, even with a new look, play does not change.

"I don't think the new jerseys help at all because we know that no matter how we look we still need to go out there and do our thing," Schwartz said.

The play among the team will not change, but the confidence and hype might rise with the uniform change.

"Although the jerseys cannot make us better, they can bring a new level of confidence," Zimske said.

If a team gets new uniforms, there may be new equipment to go along with them, whether it be basic safety gear or more elaborate equipment.

"We have to get baseballs every year because baseballs don't last; usually they are done after the season," Byall said, "Just some basic equipment like helmets, there are regulations on helmets to make sure that they aren't cracked."

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I Do?

"Promposals" become commonplace, match extravagance of popping the big question

BY ALLIE NELSON
Executive Editor

From arranging lit candles to organizing a life-size demonstration, inviting a date to prom has consistently become more and more of an expedition, so much so that the tradition has coined a new term: "promposal." The spring formal begins with the courage and originality necessary to woo a date to say yes.

The task, creating an originally exciting promposal, preceded by an inflated amount of anticipation, is comparable to a marriage proposal, aside from the commitment involved with the promise of forever. The time of the year when Instagram is overwhelmed by the evidence of these thoughtful surprises is upon us. It all leads to the big question: "Prom?"

Caution: Surprise Ahead

After a week long vacation, the last thing Alyssa Hoffman (12) expected to encounter was what she thought a deadly situation.

"(Skylar Garver (12)) set up kind of like a crime scene in one of the rooms in my house," Hoffman said. "There was caution tape everywhere and then there was a sign across the room that said 'Alyssa, I'm dying to go to prom with you' and then on the ground he had outlined a body in tape. And there was chocolate and a stuffed animal and that sort of thing, and he was sitting there with a rose. It was so cute."

PHOTO COURTESY OF ALYSSA HOFFMAN

The promposal being a replica of ä dangerous situation, Hoffman was shocked.

"For the (first) split second, I did (think it was an actual crime scene) because I hadn't been home all week," Hoffman said. "I was like 'did something happen? Was there a fire or something?'"

Because Hoffman is planning to pursue work in criminal investigation, the approach was not only unique, but specialized to her personality. The promposal gave her boyfriend a chance to express his appreciation of who she is.

"It showed that he knows me well enough to incorporate that personal aspect into (asking me to prom) and that he actually went to some effort to make something relatable or something that I would love, but it was also just something fun and hilarious because that's what he does."

The invitation also heightened anticipations for the true motive behind the promposal.

"I think it's really upped the expectations for (prom) and I feel like people maybe feel a little bit more stressed out," Hoffman said. "Prom has become a lot bigger of a production. It's like a wedding proposal for some people. It just makes it a bigger experience."

Unexpected Pick-Me-Up

To Sabrina Medert (12), it was not out of the ordinary to be greeted with a favorite Starbucks blend by her boyfriend Parker Sterling (12). Coffee being one of her favorite things, an evening visit and a thoughtful gift was normal; she had no suspicion of any surprises.

"I was going to throw my cup away and he told me to wait," Medert said. "He had this whole speech prepared and then he took off the cozy on the cup and underneath it said 'Will you go to prom with me?'"

Because promposals have increasingly become more important to the experience, they have been integrated into American high school culture. In fact, they even have their benefits.

"I think a lot of times girls are seen as the thoughtful ones and the ones that do things in relationships or just in general and (people asking dates to prom in creatively) shows that guys can be caring, too," Medert said. "I feel bad for the people who don't ever get asked in a different way or if they get asked in a cheesy way like over text or something."

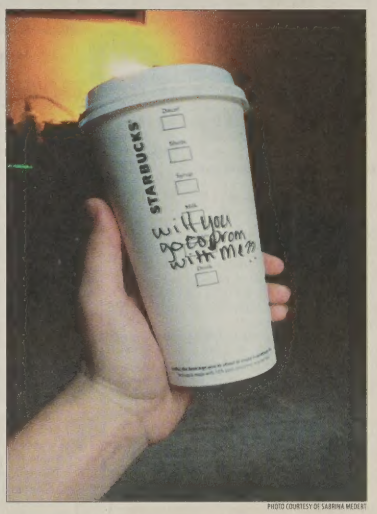


PHOTO COURTESY OF SABRINA MEDERT

The proposal being personalized to her, Medert was especially appreciative.

"I knew he was going to ask me, but not that soon or in that way," Medert said. "I was really happy."

Ambrosial Promposal

Usually, the question is 'pickup or delivery?' Usually, the question is 'cheese or pepperoni?' Usually, however, does not apply to Ben Bardon (11), whose question was 'I know this is cheesy, but prom?'

"When I got out of my car he was standing in his driveway with a pizza and on the lid it said 'I know this is cheesy, but prom?'" Hannah Stine (11) said.

Expecting some kind of promposal, Stine was still happily surprised at her boyfriend's efforts to thoughtfully invite his date.

"It was more of a surprise that it happened when it did, but he always has the most creative ideas so I knew it would be a really sweet way however he decided to ask me," Stine said. "I loved how he made it my favorite food."

From the pun to the edible prop, the appetizing asking was everything for which Stine ever hoped.

"The whole idea was...perfect," Stine said.

Whether appreciated or not, promposals have become a part of the high school dance tradition. Luckily, the displays do not go without an ulterior purpose. The clever, sometimes goofy, gestures, which stem from the pressure to be as creative as possible, are not conducted simply to temporarily shock their dates. Promposals provide askers with an opportunity.

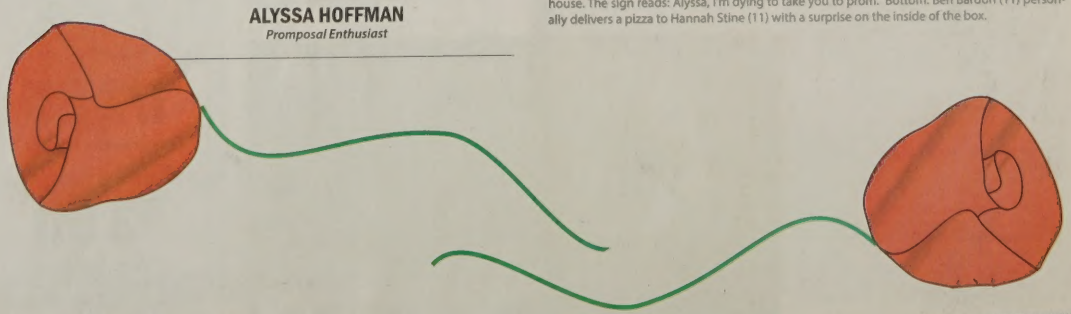
"I think it's a chance for guys to show that they're thoughtful too," Medert said. "I think girls are often seen as the thoughtful ones that do things for the relationship so (promposals) show that guys can (do the same)."

PHOTO COURTESY OF HANNAH STINE

Top: Sabrina Medert (12) removes the sleeve on her coffee cup to find a note from her boyfriend Parker Sterling (12) which asks her to accompany him to the dance. Middle: Skylar Garver (12) invites his girlfriend Alyssa Hoffman (12) to prom by creating a fake crime scene in a room of her house. The sign reads: Alyssa, I'm dying to take you to prom. Bottom: Ben Bardon (11) personally delivers a pizza to Hannah Stine (11) with a surprise on the inside of the box.

"Prom has become a lot bigger of a production. It's like a wedding proposal for some people. It just makes it a bigger experience."

ALYSSA HOFFMAN
Promposal Enthusiast



ILLUSTRATIONS BY ALLIE NELSON

the SPARTANA

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Friday, May 30, 2014 | A 2009 Pacemaker Winner | Homestead High School's News Source Since 1969

Students invite teachers to gradution

By Tatum Ellis
News Writer

As the end of the school year draws closer, the thoughts of seniors center on the event many of them have been focusing on for years: graduation. This landmark entails a flurry of planning for graduates, whether they prepare for the workforce or for furthering their education at college. Among the list of plans to be made lies the matter of distributing invitations for graduation parties. Each student must select the individuals who have made the greatest impact upon him or her through the duration of high school. Unsurprisingly, teachers often fall under the category of those who have had a positive effect.

Attending a student's graduation party is more complicated for teachers than it may first appear to be, however. Graduation invitations often roll in by the dozens, creating an impossible situation from both a time and finance perspective. This problem is particularly present among educators who teach to primarily upperclassmen.

"You just can't make it to every graduation party, but if you go to one you're kind of obligated to go to them all," Kent Mitchell, business teacher, said .

Although graduation parties are generally family-oriented, inappropriate behavior by students is not entirely unheard of. Teachers can often find themselves in a difficult position when trying to determine where their role as an authority figure ends. This reason combined with the daunting task of appearing at every party often leads teachers to avoid graduation parties altogether.

Exceptions to this situation often occur in regards to those teachers who have come to know the student in an atmosphere outside of the classroom. The most common receivers of graduation invitations are teachers who are involved in extracurricular activities. Whether they served as a coach or a club leader, bonds formed outside of a traditional classroom setting are often the strongest.

"When I graduate I'll invite (Steve) Barber and (Brad) Wadkins, since I've had them both for four years (in band)," Rachael Miller (11) said.

Although the teachers may receive invitations to graduation parties from a large portion of their students, the more meaningful offers are often from students the teachers had as underclassmen.

"When you get invited to the graduation party of a student you had for their freshman or sophomore year, it means a lot," Ellen Nelson, English teacher, said.

The thoughtfulness of such a gesture can only be produced by a truly meaningful impression made on the part of the teacher. Throughout each student's high school career, only a handful of teachers will leave a lasting effect on the life of a student. In the end, the desire to leave this type of influence is what prompted many educators to pursue their career path in the first place. The relationship formed between a student and their favorite teacher is irreplaceable--whether a teacher can attend a graduation party or not, he or she has still made an invaluable contribution to each student's high school experience.

"...I try to make it to graduation day," Nelson said. "I think it's important to share this accomplishment with (the students)."

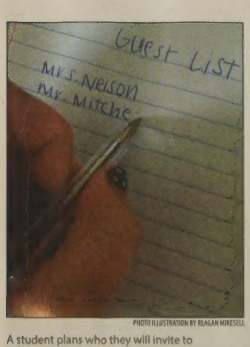

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY REAGAN MIKESELL

A student plans who they will invite to graduation. Students sent an invitation to their favorite teacher during advisory.

PHOTO BY TESSA VIRGILIO

Holly Wenning discusses symbolism in Lord of the Flies with her English Literature class. Next year, Wenning will teach a contemporary literature class.

Change of Pace

New classes, dual-credit opportunities generate interest from students

By Tessa Virgilio
News Editor

Students, with their counselors, have concluded the process that the end of every school year brings- the selection of next year's classes. As seniors skip specific days and flaunt their upcoming grad parties, underclassmen repeat the procedure of browsing the revised course guide, locating course numbers and jotting them down on an unscathed sheet containing seven blank class periods. This year, students were presented with a wealth of new course opportunities to choose from in many departments including English and physical education.

The goal of adding new classes every year is to raise student familiarity and capability within a college atmosphere. A large majority of Homestead graduates will proceed to college, where dual-credit courses will prove to be worthwhile. Therefore, alongside the addition of the courses themselves, many existing and new courses will be made available as dual-credit opportunities. This means a student can be taking a course in high school for credit, while also earning college credits for that same course at a reduced cost or even for free.

"I think what the state of Indiana is trying to do is give high school students an opportunity to gain some college experience," LaShanda Gates, guidance counselor, said. "In some cases and some schools, students can get an associate's degree before they even graduate from high school, all at a discounted price. That's the best part."

Through IPFW, Homestead will offer speech, economics and a multitude of other courses as dual-credit opportunities to students next year. Many of the courses in the business department will serve as dual-credit as well. However, the novel, unprecedented class choices were the topic of conversation while class scheduling was in session.

"I know that Mr. Hill is teaching (film literature), and he's my favorite teacher, so I thought it would be fun with him," Cassidy Geller (11) said.

At the beginning of the 2014-15 school year, many departments, primarily the English department, will incur an abundance of new classes that aim to enhance the curriculum.

"There is a state list of classes that we have to stick to, but it's a very long list, so at the beginning of the year in mid-first semester, English teachers were told that we could create a new class," Holly Wenning, English teacher, said.

Wenning will be teaching a class called contemporary literature, a subject she was motivated to share with students.

"Everything that happens in (contemporary literature) is going to be something that I have created, something that I am passionate about, and (something) that I am excited to teach," Wenning said.

The popular English courses for next year include film literature, "a study of how literature is adapted for film or media and includes role playing as film directors for selected screen scenes," poetry, which "emphasizes a greater appreciation and understanding of the genre through critical analysis of various poetic forms and literary devices," and creative writing, "a study and application of the rhetorical writing strategies for prose and poetry," according to the 2014-15 course guide.

"Educational research shows that students will learn more if they are engaged in their learning," Wenning said. "Engagement, we have also seen in educational research, happens more when students have a choice of what they're going to be doing. Adding all these classes allows students to have choice and then hopefully they will become more engaged, and learn more as a result."

The new English classes are recommended mostly for

Bus 39's rerouting issues delay students

By Ethan Zweig
Copy Editor

▶25
Minutes late Bus 39 is when the bus must run a double

While other students get to board their buses immediately after school, riders of the dreaded bus 39 constantly have to wait after school for extensive periods of time while their bus quickly runs an alternate route. Some are even forced to walk home themselves or get a ride from someone else.

The delay of bus 39's transportation services serves as a major inconvenience to students with jobs and homework.

"It's always late picking us up from school and I have to wait for it (...) and I have things to get done, so having to wait longer for the bus interferes with that," Sierra Lucas (11) said. "It's just an annoying inconvenience."

The problem with the bus is that a lack of buses and bus drivers forces certain buses near the schools to run double routes.

"On days when there aren't enough parents driving their kid or we don't have enough drivers, we have to reroute other buses to fill the gap and pick up the kid," Dave Rarick, transportation director, said. "This usually delays the bus by 15 minutes, but it primarily affects students who live (within two miles of the school)."

The administration seems optimistic and positive in regards to the situation.

"We think our bus system (as a whole) is efficient, but we need more people to become bus drivers," Rarick said. "Unfortunately, the process to become a bus driver involves an extensive training period, obtaining a bus-driving license from the (Bureau of Motor Vehicles), and many people find it hard work and challenging."

Given the difficulties of finding more bus drivers, getting rid of the bus route has been suggested at school board meetings, and two bus routes have been confirmed for elimination beginning this fall. These routes are likely the ones run by bus 39, given that the area affected is located within two miles of Homestead, according to the Journal Gazette.

Many students are greatly impacted by the bus routes' removal, since any plans made after school can be affected by sudden rerouting.

"I'm graduating this year (...) but for other kids, either their parents have to take them or they have to walk (to school), or just not go at all," Lucas said.

While most students are complaining about the transportation issues, faculty in the Southwest Allen County school district feel that bus 39's double routing is beneficial to students.

"It's an opportunity for them to (get exercise and) walk home from school, one that they might not get otherwise," Rarick said. "They can also work diligently on homework at school, instead of being distracted (at home)."

Rolling grades begin

Quarter system replaced for 2014-15 year

By Sydney Isroff
Business Manager

For the past decade, grades from two quarters were averaged together to find the final semester grade. Park Ginder, principal, and administrators have decided to modify this system. Grades will now roll from one quarter to another with no averaging at the end of the semester.

At the beginning of the 2014-15 school year, this change is being put in place for the benefit of the student. With no end of quarter grades, students will be provided with a better opportunity to improve their grades throughout the year.

"It should be more fair in terms of figuring (their) grade," Ginder said.

Not only does the change give more leeway for the teachers in their curriculum with testing and assigning homework, but it gives students a better chance to complete the course successfully.

"We want to be able to offer students (more) do overs and (test retakes)."
PARK GINDER
Principal

Though end of quarter averaging will be removed, quarterly testing will still be in place. Near the end of a quarter, teachers will be given a ten day period in which quarterlies must be given. This time allotment will allow teachers more time to decide when giving a quarterly test to their students is most appropriate inside their specific course.

Ginder discussed how the switchover to rolling grades will mimic college grading, and how it will further prepare students for the college environment.

"The rolling grades (are) a great way for students to prepare for college grading," Caroline Weigand (12) said.

Ginder emphasized the point that each class is different; some are more difficult at the beginning of the year and others at the end. The removal of end of quarter grades will let the teacher plan a schedule more based on their class and the time the semester ends, rather than when the end of the quarter is.

Teachers sometimes find themselves rushing to give exams before the quarter is over. Come next year's change, they will be able to be more relaxed in their planning period and able give students a less stressful period of quarterlies.

"I think this will give students a better opportunity to improve their grades throughout the year," Miranda Gidley (12) said.

For Ginder, this change in grading will provide a second chance for students. He realizes students are going to fall behind in school, but they should be able to fix their grades instead of being permanently stuck with them at the end of the quarter.

"We want to be able to offer students (more) do overs and (test retakes)," Ginder said.

A clearer understanding of the change will come next year when teachers are more informed on it and students become accustomed to the change.. This new system in grades next year will not only benefit the students, but give teachers the opportunity to plan their curriculum according their specific class. Now teachers can plan their test placement according to their individual class. This change will result in better preparation from the teachers.

Senior staff members bid farewell

PHOTO BY TESSA VIRGILIO

Left to right: Senior staff members Haiden Steingass, Megan Cater, Sydney Isroff, Priscilla Lin, William Ngo and Ian McKenzie take a final selfie.

I've never considered myself an artist.

As a child I struggled to stay inside the lines of my Disney Princess coloring books. None of my elementary artwork made it to FAME. Most of my drawing attempts turn out to be indistinguishable. But what I've learned about art is that it doesn't have to be made from crayons or paper maché. Art can be anything you want it to be—even a page full of perfect picas and Serif6 Beta font.

Working on the school newspaper may not seem like a glamorous job, and in many ways, it's not. My time on staff consisted of late nights and early mornings. I developed a debatably unhealthy addiction to caffeine, and rather impressive ability to function on one hour of sleep. But when I look back on my time spent on Spartana, I won't remember the sleep deprivation or the tears of frustration; I'll remember the two years I spent making art.

I'll remember with fondness the unproductive paste-up sessions spent with William Ngo (12), Allie Nelson (11) and Sydney Isroff (12) as our breaks took up more time than our hours of actual work. I'll remember spending hours in the Yellow Room each week, thinking partly about journalism but mostly about far more philosophical things.

I'll remember the fullness of the pride I felt during the delivery of every issue, and the warmth of the happy tears that trickled when I found out Spartana won Best in Show. I'll even remember, as I do now, how Joe Laughlin ('13) sat a year ago trying to make his senior column as good as Patrick Svitek's ('10); I just want to make my senior column as good as Joe's.

As my time left on Spartana is hastily ticking away, I find myself eternally grateful for the time I spent on staff. I could not be more thankful for the unwavering support of Justin Peeper, a teacher and adviser who was never at a loss for words of encouragement (in both English and Spanish), of my loyal friends and family members, who faithfully read every issue of the paper and foremost and finally of Amanda Eid, a friend and adviser of whom we expected nothing but gave us everything.

As I look at the white painted walls of the formerly named Yellow Room, I stare at the remnants of the quotes placed on the senior wall from previous years. While most are indecipherable under the thick coat of white paint, Colton Shaffer's ('13) still boldly shines through. In big black letters, the three simple words "Make your mark" continue to scream at me.

So maybe art isn't about staying in the lines at all. Because in the end, we all just want to make a mark. I like to think I've, in some small way, made mine.

- Priscilla Lin

"I have not only made memorable friends from Spartana, but memories that will be with me forever."

SYDNEY ISROFF

Beginning my Freshman year I realized the brains of the school hung out in the famous Yellow Room. This room not only represented the freedom of Spartana but the ability to create a Nationally recognized paper. Since figuring this out, I strode to be apart of this elite group of people, even if I did not meet every credential.

Like probably every other senior, I write this column last minute to continue the legacy of Spartana. Staying up all night finishing stories, and making phone calls to those who failed to turn theirs in, Spartana has shaped me as not only the writer I am today, but the person I have become.

As school comes to an end I will miss the late nights in the Yellow Room, the hectic night before the paper goes to print and the adventures trying to find interviewees (things I never thought I would miss).

I must thank the impactful Rodd Kuhn (former advisor) for giving me a hard time when it came to proving myself. The old man not only gave me a hard time with everything, but also eventually taught me the skills needed to become the journalist I stride to be. I continue on to college for a journalism degree, proud to have been involved in such a successful publication. I will always take with me the memory of winning Best in Show, and the cockiness at the conventions that came with it. I have not only made memorable friends from Spartana, but memories that will be with me forever.

As I begin writing this senior column the night before it is due, I reflect on my time here on the Spartana in a cheesy manor. This last minute column is a reflection of my newspaper career.

Freshman year I began the great adventure which is journalism. Mr. Kuhn taught me about picas and the inverted pyramid in J1 and J2, but I didn't actually learn what being a newspaper writer was until I was thrown into the hectic two-week production cycle my sophomore year.

I chose to write for news, mainly because my articles would always be on the first or second page and that was important to me as a 16-year-old.

From interviewing school board members to elementary school principals, friends and strangers, I learned how to interact with new people. I think that is the aspect of Spartana that I appreciate the most. The experience I gained about professionalism, conducting formal interviews and speaking skills in general would not have been gained without Spartana.

Although I never wrote any groundbreaking stories or made any strides toward saving the world or anything to that affect, I am proud of my time on Spartana. I learned how to write well, learned more than I wanted about AP style and learned how to work with a deadline.

I will be attending Ball State University Honors College in the fall. My time as a newspaper writer has ended, and it is a bittersweet time. No more deadlines and extension requests. But I will miss seeing my writing published for everyone to see. Writing has the power to change the world, and although I didn't do anything extraordinary, I hope at least someone enjoyed reading what I wrote.

"I am proud of my time on *Spartana*."

MEGAN CATER

I signed up for yearbook—not newspaper. When I received my schedule at registration, I remember my annoyance because I had no desire to write articles every week or interview strangers. There was nothing that sounded remotely appealing to me about the program, but I had no choice because yearbook class was only held during the period I had dance class.

This left me bitter walking into the pub room the first day of sophomore year. Everyone had his or her place to sit, and mine was in the corner by myself, as cliché as that is. The upperclassmen took charge and requested for everyone to sit in a circle for a get-to-know-you activity and to apply for positions on staff. When it was my turn, my anxiety level shot through the roof. I had no idea how to work on a newspaper; I didn't even know that it was called The Spartana. Editors selected me to write sports--something I would have never chosen voluntarily. It was liberating to enter a world in which I knew nothing about and still be successful. The pieces fell into place after two years of experience, and I became sports editor. To my own surprise, I hope to study sports broadcasting at IU next year.

Even if I turn away from the sports aspect and explore new opportunities in college, I cannot imagine doing anything unrelated to journalism. Some may say it is a dying profession, but when there are people who care about it as much as my fellow writers and I do, there will always be some form of it. Everything about my years on the Spartana staff positively impacted me. I found my strengths and weakness as a writer, I built relationships with amazing people and even found my college roommate. My experience taught me an incredible lesson: just because something does not happen how you imagined it would does not mean great things will not result from it. There's a purpose for every obstacle, a reason for every new person you meet, and a potentially life changing opportunity in every unwanted chance.

-Haiden Steingass

Endings suck.

A lot. Like when "Hunger Games: Catching Fire" ended, I wasn't emotionally ready to walk out the theater yet. I wanted to linger around just in case the movie decided to continue after the credits, and maybe if I linger around the newspaper room after graduation, I won't have to say goodbye.

Okay, linger is an inappropriate word choice here. It makes me seem like a middle-aged creep who works at a school and questionably loves teenagers. But maybe if I keep checking the email accounts or continue creating design layouts, I won't have to say goodbye to my staff—my family.

When I joined the journalism program as a chubby, inexperienced freshman, I quickly learned to honor, even fear, my assigned deadlines because one late story, one missing photograph could delay an entire issue. Clearly I forgot that lesson when I sometimes began writing stories at 11:20 p.m. that were due at midnight. Such as this column you're reading now! Rebel without a clause. Get it? I'm funny. Laugh.

All the work (i.e. interviewing, designing, writing and taking photos) which led to those deadlines can equate with all my years on staff: the friends I adore, the advisers I admire and the school yearbook I secretly rival. I won't have to linger around the journalism room because unforgettable memories from the past four years will flood my mind every time I recall this publication. I know my staff will continue its outstanding legacy next year regardless of my presence.

I guess after some time though, I became less immune to the idea of deadlines because I'm especially counting down for this upcoming deadline—graduation. Being an individual no longer has to be just a blurb. It is the special feature.

Endings suck.

Good thing my life is just beginning.

-William Ngo

"Good thing my life is just beginning."

WILLIAM NGO

the SPARTANA
STAFF & EDITORIAL POLICY 2014-2015

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The Spartana is a bi-weekly production of Student Publications: Newspaper at Homestead High School. Its purpose is to enlighten, educate and entertain. The Spartana has, and may continue to, operate as a limited open forum for the free exchange of ideas.

Staff members support the First Amendment in its entirety and oppose censorship in any form. The content of the paper is determined by the student staff. In cases of potentially controversial material, the Editorial Board will meet to decide the content of the newspaper. The staff will be assisted by the adviser in areas of professional ethics and legalities.

Material that is libelous or obscene as defined by Fort Wayne Newspapers or could cause a substantial and material disruption of the school day as defined by the Supreme Court will not be printed.

Southwest Allen County corporation encourages vigorous treatment of a wide range of subject matter, including controversial issues and student journalists are free to report and to editorialize on events, ideas, and issues in their high school, community, nation and world according to Policy Number 4150.

Public input will be accepted from the Homestead community in the form of letters to the editor. Letters must follow standards concerning libel or obscenity. Those that could cause a substantial and material disruption to the school day will not be printed. Letters can be e-mailed to The Spartana at thespartana@gmail.com

Ginder's rules, 4

PHOTO BY TESSA VIRGILIO

Block schedules add options for required credits, student schedules

BY ETHAN YDE
Copy Editor

While Summit Middle School has maintained an eight period daily schedule, Woodside Middle School has had a block schedule, in which there are two alternating block days with four different classes each day. The school board has decided to shift Summit to a block schedule, a much more logical option, which Homestead should also consider for upcoming years.

The block schedule is more efficient when compared to the current seven period schedule, simply because students and teachers are able to accomplish more in the 90 minute classes block scheduling allots.

When students arrive to class, the teacher usually spends the first five or ten minutes settling in and explaining the plans for the day, or yesterday's homework. Then, the last five minutes is spent wrapping up, and listening to the pitter patter and zips of students packing book bags.

With only four classes in a day, there would be more time in each class for actual substance. The block schedule cuts the time for settling in and out in half, thus allowing more productive class time.

This alternative schedule also cuts the number of passing periods in half due to the fact that there would be half of the number of classes in each day. Students spend less time chatting in the hallways, and more time in class, thus having more class time will create a more productive work day.

In addition to more efficient class time, students would also be able to take more credit hours in general under a block schedule.

Students at Woodside have four classes on a "red day" and four classes on a "white day," which adds up to eight classes per semester. Students at Homestead are only able to take seven classes in each day, leaving out a credit each semester that could have been fulfilled.

A block schedule would allow for students to receive eight more credits over the course of four years in high school, making it easier for them to fulfill the requirements needed in order to complete a Core 40, honors or technical honors diploma. The additional classes may result in more students attending the graduation ceremony than ever before.

Four classes in each school day would also ease many students into a college schedule. Because college students only take about two or three classes each day, block scheduling would feel more similar to this schedule. A seven class schedule is much different than the traditional college schedule, which may cause students to have disorder in the maintenance of their schedules in the first year of attending a university setting.

"The additional classes (allowed by block scheduling) may result in more students attending the graduation ceremony than ever before."

ETHAN YDE

Summit is switching to Woodside's block schedule, so the real question is: why is Homestead not also making the switch? A block schedule would benefit the high school as much as the middle schools, and high school is an important time to prepare for the future.

It is much more reasonable and efficient for high school students to be taking more classes and longer classes than the current situation. It is not logical to switch classes six times in a day, when the school has the option to enforce doing so only three times.

With two days to do homework and prepare for the next class, block scheduling makes for a much less stressful work week for students. Southwest Allen County Schools should not only shift Summit to match Woodside's block schedule, but also the schedule at Homestead.

twitter take

The Spartana attempts to capture the most impulsive responses on Twitter.

Question: "What would you do for a senior prank if you wouldn't get in trouble?"

@DylanArango - Dylan Arango (11) ▶ "Find a way to get on the intercom play and never gonna give you up, troll song, or the derp song for as long as possible."

@ABSamatterafact - Abbey Kittaka (12) ▶ "School wide water gun/water balloon fight."

@gaby_meissner - Gaby Meissner (10) ▶ "Fill all of the bathroom sinks with cereal... oo and you can't forget the spoon and orange juice."

@TheKurtGutwein - Kurt Gutwein (11) ▶ "Drive go karts through the school all day long throwing banana peels."

Store sells domesticated chickens

Consumers unaware of responsibility required by pet ownership

BY KATIE MAHER
Business Manager

First it became a cultural phenomenon to go to pet stores and play with the puppies, but this has evolved into going to farm stores to play with chicks. Unlike the cost of the puppies, which often deters people from buying them, the chicks are very affordable; however, owning a chick still comes with a price.

To avoid the problems associated with owning chicks, people need to understand why buying cheap chickens for pets is a bad idea, and farm stores, too, should too take action to protect their chicks.

Although they are cute, chicks and ducklings are not good pets for most families. Several people will buy chicks and ducklings as Easter gifts for kids, but it does not take long for the little chicks and ducklings to become a huge problem. Chicks and ducklings are not novelty toys; they are live, domestic birds that require special care and dedication to keep healthy. The birds will quickly outgrow their cute "Easter" stage, and live for years.

People will buy chicks at these farm stores for a mere two dollars each, while not thinking about the long-term repercussions. Chickens and ducks need a large space to roam, which most suburban homes cannot offer. When the chicks grow into chickens and become too much to handle, they are often dumped in parks or fields. Unfortunately, these domestic birds do not have any knowledge of surviving in the wild, so death is inevitable.

Chickens and ducks that are surrendered to animal shelters do not face a better chance of survival either. Just like their former owners did not want a grown chicken, many people do not want to adopt an adult chicken. To avoid the problem altogether, it is best to not buy chicks and ducklings at these rural stores.

PHOTO BY MEGAN BUTLER

The Rural King store, which sold chickens and ducks to consumers, has raised the attention of local animal activists, who claim consumers are unaware of the responsibility required to care for the animals and that stores should not allow these animals to be purchased.

Not only should the customers consider the well-being of the chickens, but rural stores should too. For one, the practice of keeping the chicks crammed together in steel bins on the ground should be changed.

Some of the bins are crowded with so many chicks it is hard for some to move. Larger, more chick-friendly containers need to be used. Stuffing a steel tub with too many chicks can lead to chicks contracting infections from each other.

Chicks can also catch infections from the hundreds of hands a day reaching down to touch them. Baby chicks do not have strong immune systems, and the constant contact from what is probably unwashed human hands which get them sick.

Not only can the chicks get sick, but humans can also contract illnesses from handling the chicks. Chickens carry salmonella, and forgetting to get sanitize hands after handling the birds can lead to weeks of pain.

There are signs posted in the rural stores to not handle the chicks, but people often still reach in to pet them. If stores decide to sell chicks, they should be kept out of customers' reach in order to avoid infections spreading.

Stores should also inform chick buyers about the risks of owning a chicken–the risks that most people figure out too late. Stores can go further even, and figure out if the buyer's home is suitable for keeping chickens or ducks. The store's actions can protect both the birds and the buyers.

Before buying a two dollar bird, remember that you are really buying an adult chicken, too–not just a fuzzy, half- pound baby.

PHOTO BY TESSA VIRGILIO

A student lounges in the commons in yoga pants, an article of clothing which will be regulated more strictly for next school year.

Dress code changes enforce professionalism in learning environment

Recent trends among teens have drastically inflated the popularity of spandex pants.

Granted, yoga pants and leggings can be worn in a variety of ways which are tasteful and still fashionable; however, it is Homestead's policy for students to dress in a way which is conducive to learning and does not disrupt the school day.

Specifically, the handbook states that "many responsibilities dictate appropriate attire and appearance" and that "students are expected to wear their clothing and manage their appearance in a manner that does not (disrupt the school day)."

School is a place for learning, not showing off a person's particular assets. Yes, school is also a main source of social interaction for students, but it is sometimes easy to forget that it is in fact a learning environment–not the club.

It is unfortunate for students that today's society has popularized clothing which is not deemed acceptable for school, but Homestead students have the responsibility and duty to present themselves in a way which reflects well of their character and of their school's character.

There has been much speculation amongst the student body of whether or not the dress code would change in regards to spandex pants during the current school year or even the next school year, but changes have officially been inducted to the handbook.

The addition to the handbook for the 2014-15 school year, as approved by the school board, states: "Yoga pants, leggings, jeggings, stocking, tights, or any clothing made of thin, tight material such as spandex or Lycra may not be worn unless covered by shorts, skirts, sweaters, etc. that are beyond fingertip length without adjusting at all times."

One speculation behind the reasoning for the rule change is that spandex pants are distracting for males. This is, however, decidedly not the case. The change has been in progress for many years, but, with changing leadership among school administrators and whatnot, was not made official until this school year, effective next year.

Yoga pants and leggings will not be banned for the upcoming school year, but they must be paired with a top which reaches fingertip length. This will definitely be a nuisance for students, but manageable. After all, most workplaces have a similar policy which workers must abide by, so it is only logical for schools to have policies which emulate their "real-world" counterparts.

Professionalism is essential in a learning environment, and therefore should apply not only to a person's demeanor, but also in clothing choices. In that regard, the dress code changes are necessary and beneficial, despite most students' negative reactions.

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Senior pranks should be fun and safe

Pranking acceptable, but conditional to safety and legal parameters

BY COLBY SHOUP
Multimedia Manager

For students they have become urban legends. For school administrators they have become horror stories. To the general public they have become known as senior pranks. Many students who have participated in senior pranks over the years have claimed they are just innocent fun, but others still claim they are potentially dangerous to learning environments, as well as students' safety, and therefore should not be tolerated.

Despite the possible serious consequences involved, many high school students think of senior pranks as not only a beloved tradition, but a rite of passage. Jacob Lay (11) is one of these students.

"I think senior pranks exist because they are a great way to end your last year of high school with a bang," Lay said. "As long as it's not hurting anyone, damaging school property, or disrupting the school day, who cares right?"

Due to the increased popularity of social media sites like YouTube and Vine, which allow student pranksters to share video evidence of their work, there has been a sizable increase in the extravagance and quantity of senior pranks in recent years. Just last year, after a series of elaborate senior pranks in Walnut Creek, Calif. which included moving a 500-pound bench, running around school barefoot with paint on their feet and tying a goat to a pole, 25 students were not allowed to take their finals, walk at graduation or even come to school for the rest of the year. It is cases like this that help reinforce the point that extreme pranks like this one should have extreme consequences.

"(Senior pranks) are a great way to end your last year of high school with a bang."

JACOB LAY (11)
Prank Enthusiast

However, school administrators need to keep in mind that not all senior pranks are as destructive and problematic as the aforementioned case. Perhaps the most famous senior prank in Homestead's long history happened in 2010 and simply involved an outrageous amount of flamingo lawn decorations being put in the school's front lawn on the last day of school. Although technically vandalism, this prank did not warrant an extensive punishment, as it had no sinister intentions.

This school has been fairly lucky over the years in that it has seen a minimal amount of mean-spirited senior pranks, but every year the administration still insists on cracking down on hallway security and warning against senior pranks on the intercom system, as if senior pranks are a serious problem at Homestead.

Until a Spartan does something as destructive as those 25 students in Walnut Creek, the administration should give student pranksters the benefit of the doubt and assume students know not to cross the line between good, clean fun and a potentially criminal offense. After all, that feeling of rebellion in pranksters' hearts will only get stronger if they are restricted more by the administration.

Students begin looking for summer jobs to earn money

As summer approaches, summer jobs are depleting quickly. It's getting increasingly more difficult to get a potential employer to call you back, especially if you have absolutely no idea how to get a job in the first place because it's your first job ever. They'll call people who have more experience and better grades than you, but you'll have no idea because no one ever emails you back and then a month later, you've forgotten where you even applied.

Here's the thing about getting a job: it's hard. You think it's going to be easy and the manager of that one place you applied to that you've never even been to is going to call you back the day after you submit your application, but they won't. Perhaps you're luckier than me and it was super simple for you to get your super cool job at Hollister. In that case, please stop reading. You don't belong here.

Anyway, it's been hard for me to get a job, so it might be hard for you. After you get over the fact that not everyone wants to hire you, and you become completely apathetic to the process of obtaining jobs, it will become so much easier to just keep applying for literally everything.

JESS SAYIN'

You should definitely apply to every single business within a ten-mile radius of your home. You've never been there? Apply anyway. They're not even hiring right now? Who cares? Send in two applications. Apply to places you hate. You don't even need the benefits of 20 percent off a shirt you hate, but you're going to apply there anyway.

Keep in mind as you apply for jobs, even though you don't want to, that you're going to make so much money. Just think about all the money you're going to make and all the cool things you can do with that money. Also, think about all the great job experience you're going to get for the future (but don't forget about the money because you're broke).

You should actually go in and talk to the manager about any job openings, especially if you really want this job. You'll make a super great impression, and they'll probably think "Wow, this is a phenomenal person who would be perfect for my business," even if you're maybe not that qualified. Talking to the manager beforehand always gives you brownie points. I've never done this, and I'm jobless. That's really all the proof you need.

You can really go two ways when it comes to filling out your job application. You can either be completely honest, and tell your future employer that you flat out have no idea how to do basic math, or you can fill out everything the way they want to see it. The former is probably better because I'm not sure if the honesty outweighs your lack of ability to multiply 12 by 20.

References are probably a good idea to put on applications as well. Find at least one adult who has good things to say about you and your qualifications have just gone up by at least 10 qualification points.

Submitting a résumé with your application is a good idea as well only because it's more space to say great things about yourself and your accomplishments, whether they're major or minor. You got perfect attendance in second grade? Put that on your résumé. You were the first teenager on the moon? That's important, too.

With these steps, and a lot of persistence and patience, you will be on the road to riches in no time. With your killer and sometimes untrue credentials, you'll land a job in no time. You're welcome, and good luck finding a job this summer.

BY JESSICA TEBBEN
Life Editor

Senior activities as last hoorah

Special day gives seniors opportunity to showcase their talents

BY MALLORY MCCAULEY
Online Editor

As the school year draws to an end, there is a bittersweet taste to the air, especially for the seniors who will be parting ways for good. Senior activities day will take place May 30 and will include a variety show, the Mr. Spartan competition, senior superlatives, minute to win it games, a photo booth and a gourmet lunch. Seniors also are permitted to leave school early after the day's activities have concluded. Senior activities day is dedicated to giving seniors the farewell they deserve and a way for them to remember the end of their high school career.

"(The idea behind having a senior activities day is) for one last hoorah for the seniors as we are moving on," Abbi Stephens (12) said.

Seniors will be dismissed from their third period class to go to the auditorium for the senior talent show, which will display the departing students' talents to their peers, along with the senior superlatives. In the senior classes' advisory, seniors voted on different titles to give their peers such as "most likely to stay in Fort Wayne." For the senior superlatives, the student with the most votes for each superlative will win.

"I think (the voting was good)," Kara Squires, world history teacher, said. "(My senior advisory class) really had fun with it, I know that some of it was not as serious, but (superlatives) aren't supposed to be as serious anyways."

Senior activities day is dedicated to bringing the senior class together for one last time, giving them an end-of-high school memory they can always cherish.

"I hope that (the seniors) go away noticing the talent and nerve the contestants of the senior variety show and Mr. Spartan have," Stephens said. "It is a good way to see where everyone is going because of our (college) t-shirts."

To accompany the senior variety show, several male seniors will be participating in the Mr. Spartan competition which consists of displaying a talent, walking the "runway," and reading a poem. After each contestant has displayed his talent, the judges will vote on the winner. However, this is the one activity of the day that is designed to be taken as a joke rather than seriously.

"I think (the seniors) will enjoy seeing their peers featured, and I think it will be a fun experience to watch," Squires said.

Although the lunch provided for the seniors will be a lunch made by the school, the food will be of higher quality and higher student appeal than the standard lunches. They will serve items such as wing baskets and cheeseburgers. The seniors have also been directed to wear t-shirts of the college they will be attending or other post-high school plans so that they can have an idea of where everyone will be heading the following school year.

> "I hope that (the seniors) go away noticing the talent and nerve the contestants of the senior variety show and Mr. Spartan have. It is a good way to see where everyone is going because of our (college) t-shirts."
>
> **ABBI STEPHENS**
> *Senior*

After four years of high school drama and homework, this day rewards seniors and gives them a day to relax before finals. It is one day dedicated solely to enjoying each other's company and sharing a final lasting memory together.

"I think (the seniors) will benefit from the fact that (senior activities day) is really one of the last days they'll have with each other as they plan for the future," Squires said. "It will be good for them to look back on their last few moments of high school fun."

Each part in the senior activities day is designed to give the seniors a fond memory filled with laughter and friends.

"There are some great acts in the senior variety show," Ivy Kurgan (12) said. "I hope everyone has a great time and laughs a ton."

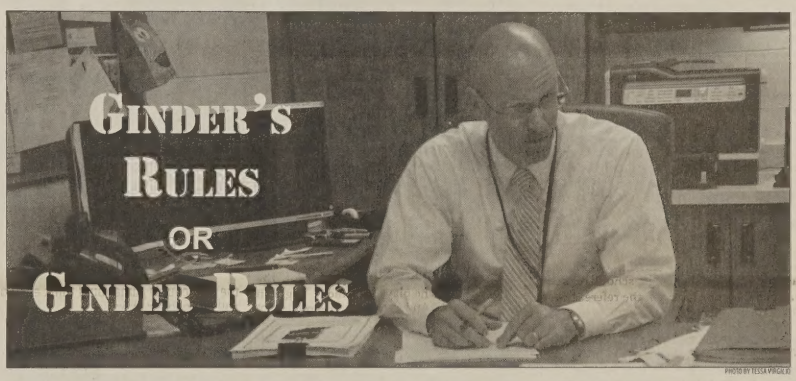

PHOTO BY TESSA VIRGILIO

Ginder sits in his office contemplating new possible rules to enact in order to better the student body. The 2013-14 school year was his first year.

Students reflect on the year of Principal Ginder's new policies

BY AWBREI VACHON
Life Writer

The 2013-14 school year featured the introduction of Park Ginder, principal, along with the introduction of new rules, many of which proved quite controversial among the student body.

Between pajama pants uproars and tardy sweeps, students have formed opinions left and right about the new rules.

One of the first major incidents involved the ban of pajama pants as a way to encourage appropriate and professional attire, but a few students felt Ginder was taking matters too far.

In protest, some students wore pajama pants to school the next day. Because these students violated the dress code, they were sent down to the office.

"It was a good laugh," Luis Ortiz (10) said. "(But) I understand why he put in that rule (so) I think the students' response was a little idiotic and immature."

Though not many students wore pajama pants to school in the first place, the administration favors professional apparel in the school setting. However, students felt it was unnecessary to blow measures out of proportion over something they viewed as insignificant.

Students also took heed to rules such as the 10/10 rule and tardy sweeps, which were imposed in order to maximize the time students spend in class.

"I don't like (the 10/10 rule) because my (bathroom) schedule does not go off of a clock; if I have to (go), I have to (go)," Leah Valentine (11) said.

Students whose classes were far apart were especially upset by this rule, since the majority of their time was spent traveling straight to class. Risking a visit to the restroom before the tardy bell rang conjured anxiety about any sporadic tardy sweeps.

"It's just bad luck to be caught in the tardy sweeps because they do them randomly," Annie Bedwell (10) said.

Aside from tardy sweeps, students were also introduced to the new 10 absences rule, by which students are only allowed 10 parent excused absences total in a semester.

This new rule streamlined the process of counting absences as well as encouraged students to be present at school. However, some students viewed the new rule as a reason to miss a full day of class rather than just a period.

"If you miss the first class of the day, it counts as a full absence, so you might as well stay home," Bedwell said.

On a more contentious note, students have caught word of next year's dress code plans, which include the ban of yoga pants without a fingertip length shirt. Some students feel this is unjust treatment for girls, since yoga pants are most commonly worn by females.

> "It's our principal; I feel like we should support him."
>
> **LUIS ORTIZ**
> *Sophomore*

Yoga pants are tight fitting, but whether or not the prohibition is for the good of the girls, boys or the academic environment is sparking controversy. The administration has decided to put stipulations on yoga pants in order to encourage a professional environment.

The new rules imposed this year were intended to encourage an environment conducive to learning, yet Ginder receives criticism for restricting students.

"People are too quick to judge, (and) I think people have a negative thought of him even though he actually is a really good guy," Ortiz said. "It's our principal; I feel like we should support him. He has a tough job of running the school and it makes it harder when people are judging you and saying you're doing a bad job."

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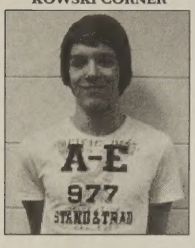
Referees do not deserve hatred and reproach for mistakes in calls

'KOWSKI CORNER



BY ADAM SWIATKOWSKI
Sports Editor

The rules of a game are what run the game, dictating what is allowed in a sport and how the game is played. Referees run the game by enforcing these rules, which in turn allows the sport to be brought to the eyes of millions across the globe.

But referees are not perfect. Countless mistakes are made in every game, no matter the sport, and sports fans are quick to take notice, ignoring the immense pressure put onto those referees from both sides of opposing teams. The decisions of referees are scrutinized by the millions watching; fans should understand there is a high level of stress involved in officiating.

One of the most recognizable series of mistakes was made by the team of NFL replacement refs who were hired during the duration of the NFL referee lockout in 2012, after regular referees could not agree with the league over a collective bargaining agreement. The labor dispute was temporarily solved by the hiring of high school and lower division college referees, but quickly became a disaster. Though the disagreement between the league and the referees was solved shortly after, the mistakes made during that period are memorable.

Miscues were constantly made in the first three weeks of the season, but the culminating mistake was made when Seattle quarterback Russell Wilson's end-of-game desperation pass was seemingly intercepted by a Green Bay defender in the end zone.

The referees, in the midst of end-of-game stress and excitement, called it a touchdown for Seattle. Seattle went on to win the game, and the fiasco was considered the worst officiating error in NFL history.

Though the referees took the blame, and rightfully so, fans should realize that these mistakes happen.

Mounting pressure causes referees to second-guess themselves, and the verbal barrage by observers on high school referees was one that may have put the referees over the edge. But the game goes on.

Soccer, on the other hand, doesn't necessarily have that luxury; referee mistakes happen often, but some high profile miscues have led to riots, and in some cases, murder.

South American countries are known for their passion for the game, which every few years leads to controversy.

In June 2013, a referee was killed in Brazil because of fan reactions from a bad call he made; the referee expelled a player for violent conduct, but the player did not agree.

The player attacked the referee, and, fearing his life, the referee ran home and grabbed a knife, attempting to defend himself while brandishing the knife. The referee ended up stabbing the player in defense, but did not seriously hurt the attacker.

Fans at the game, however, decided his actions went too far, even though the referee was defending his life. The fans gave the most severe punishment possible, and killed the referee.

Such retribution is disgusting to comprehend, bringing shame to the world's most popular sport and giving a regrettable reputation to the people of Brazil.

For fans to kill a referee is unthinkable, but controversies akin to these will remain an occurrence in the sport, due to the high chance of referee errors and characteristic passion of the fans.

> "Such retribution is disgusting to comprehend, bringing shame to the world's most popular sport and giving a regrettable reputation to the people of Brazil."
>
> **ADAM SWIATKOWSKI**

Routine errors are a big part of soccer, and it would be rare if a game did not have at least three or more blatant slipups by the game's law enforcers.

Dubious calls in the World Cup, such as goals not rightfully counted, have happened at several tournaments, most notably Frank Lampard's shot in 2010 that went off the crossbar and bounced out of the goal, despite landing past the goal line.

Since referees were not close enough to the net to call, a goal was never given.

Soccer fans have increasingly called for use of instant replay, such as the NFL's system, that could allow footage to be watched and correct calls be made.

Though these calls for replays will likely go unheeded due to the likelihood of game time interruption, fans should realize that these mistakes will continue to be made and that pausing to correct them will take away a vital aspect of soccer: the free flow of the game.

So maybe referees don't deserve the backlash they constantly receive from fans; officials are the backbone of sports, holding individual sports and athletes up to the high quality that should be expected.

In the end there will be mistakes, but those mistakes are something that is part of sports.

They are an inherent and unfortunately negative aspect of sport, but add fuel to the fiery passion of fans and players alike.

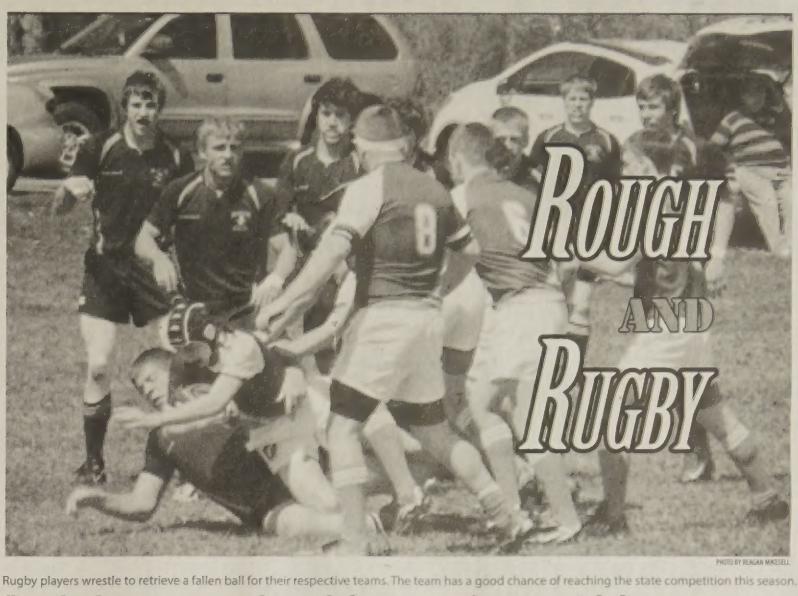


PHOTO BY REAGAN MCSELL

Rugby players wrestle to retrieve a fallen ball for their respective teams. The team has a good chance of reaching the state competition this season.

Rugby boys remain hopeful to attend state with larger team

BY AUSTEN CUMMINGS
Writer

The rugby team has made a great run through the season, and feels comfortable about their chances of going deep into the postseason, with the possibility of playing in the state championship game on the cards. However, Austin Gilpin (10) has seen a couple rough spots throughout the season.

"I think (the season is) going pretty good," Gilpin said. "We lost some games that we should not have but we have a good chance to go to state this year."

Jack Dugan (11) has seen progress in the season as well, noticing the vast improvement from last year. A better record coupled with more advanced plays and more determined playing has led to a better season for the rugby team.

"I feel this season is substantially better than last season," Dugan said.

Isaiah Anderson (10) has seen a lot of potential and improvement from a new coach. He feels the team has learned a lot from the new coach.

"We have another coach on our team, which (...) has helped the team a lot. The good thing is he plays for a men's league in Fort Wayne," Anderson said. "He might not be able to be there all the time, but we have been taught a lot by him and it shows in our games."

Other players have seen all of the improvements the new coach has made, as well as how he has helped with getting the team ready for practice and keeping it organized every day.

"He's for sure a good coach," Gilpin said. "He helped with getting practice organized and flowing, which (in turn) has helped (the team) get better."

A combination of a new coach and many good practices is one of the reasons why the team has done so well this season, along with another factor: a decrease in injuries. The rugby team was notoriously known for having a large injury list, and a lot of those injuries were major and even season ending. Gilpin was one of the few who suffered an injury this season, but was only kept out for a couple of weeks.

"We have had some minor injuries," Gilpin said. "I got a concussion in the second game and was out for two weeks. We could've used some of our guys that were injured in the past couple games but I think everyone will be good for playoffs."

> "We lost some games that we should not have, but we have a good chance to go to state this year."
>
> **AUSTIN GILPIN (10)**

With the hope for a healthy team for playoffs, there are high expectations among the team to make it to the team's common goal: the state championship.

"The limited amount of injuries has helped a lot because we don't have to worry about how we will manage to fill positions," Anderson said. "Now that the team is bigger, we have more people to work with."

Rugby players run with the ball in attempt of scoring a goal.

With a larger team, there is more room for a few injuries, which means that there are people to fill positions for the injured players. The increase in number of players and decrease in number of injuries may be the key factor in taking the rugby team all the way to a state title.

Track team's tough practices pay off

Track team places third at Conference with record-breakers, eagerly awaits state finals

BY GWEN MIDDLETON
Writer

Hurdles were jumped during this track season. Records were broken. Meets were won. As the season ran, unbreakable bonds were made. The track team placed third at Conference, fifth against Penn, and won the rest. Lindley Kistler (10) broke a school record for the 100 meter dash.

"I think we did great this year," Julia Stockman (10), 4x4 meter relay and 400 open dash runner, said. "I wasn't sure what to expect this year without having the leadership of some of our seniors from last year, but overall the seniors this year really stepped up (as well as the) upper classmen. We just had a really great team overall. It wasn't just one area, it was the whole team that really just stepped up this year and did great."

The track team dedicates themselves to the season on and off the field with two hour practices every day after school. During practices, the team sprints around the track and up the stairs as a group before breaking off to work on their individual events. Most track members train outside of their daily practices as well.

"I usually just workout to get stronger so my body doesn't get as tired so easily in the meets," Logan Ormsby (11), long jumper and hurdler, said.

Most of the athletes have been running track since they were young. Like other sports,
track requires natural talent and countless hours of working on their skill and technique. Many amazing track athletes began with the smaller meets, such as the Hershey Track Meet in elementary school. Many of the athletes participate in other sports so that they can stay in optimal condition for the season.

"I started (locally) in elementary school with the Hershey Track Meet." Stockman said.

"And I (continued running) in sixth grade, (but in) seventh and eighth grade I couldn't because of soccer. I have done it in my two years of high school, so far, and I expect to continue."

The positive atmosphere in track can be seen at meets and during practices. Without the bond between the athletes, the team would not have been as successful in the season, and would not be in the position they have earned now.

"Our team is very competitive and obviously we love to win, so we're constantly pushing
each other to get better." Ormsby said.

The track team would love to continue breaking records and the winning meets next season. They are expecting for the incoming freshmen to emulate their powerful season in coming years.

"(As a note to incoming freshmen,) don't be scared," Stockman advised. "Just, go out and do what you can do. Don't be intimidated by the upperclassmen; just come in and do what you know how to do."

Both the boys and girls track seasons are not over yet. State finals take place on June 6 and 7 during summer break Bloomington.

PHOTO BY MEGAN BUTLER

Lindley Kistler (10) dashes in her heat to make distance between her and her opponents.

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A NEW CHAPTER

Goodbyes do not only pertain to students, but to departing teachers

By Allie Nelson
Executive Editor

A mere few days separates students and faculty from the freedom of summer. As some students look forward to the upcoming year of high school in a different grade, seniors graduate, ready for college. Some teachers are preparing for a similar type of departure. Whether the next step be reserved for a new career or for retirement, these teachers graduate, too. As the final pages turn and tassels swish upon the heads of leaving students, the school bids farewell to another class.

Commonly remembered for his curriculum-rooted puns and knowledge in his field of science, biology teacher Steve Bushong possesses 26 years of memories from which he will be remembered.

"I try to have fun in life and if you take it too seriously it will drive you nuts," Bushong said. "My nature is to see the funny side of things. I can't really help that. It's a way that I've been able to get through. Some kids like it, and I think some of the kids probably hate it. You know, that's just life."

His decision not prompted by a certain event, Bushong followed his intuition to schedule his retirement for this year.

"Age wise I'm at a position where it's time to retire," Bushong said. "People have always told me you'll know when it's time and this year I really had that (feeling). It's time to retire. It's time to go."

Science teacher Steve Bushong explains anatomy information as he assists a student with one of the final dissections in one of his classes of freshman biology.

PHOTOS BY REAGAN MIKESELL

Bushong's motivation to retire stems from his need for change. Although he has not made concrete plans for the future, he knows he will enjoy his additional five days a week through activities he was never able to fit into his schedule.

"My plans are to do whatever I want to do," Bushong said. "That's the question that keeps coming up from everybody is what are you going to do when you retire and my response is always whatever I feel like. I enjoy golfing. I love to fish and haven't had a lot of time to do that so I certainly want to do that."

Bushong's dedication to the science department and involvement with nonacademic programs exemplify his belief in the students and his commitment to making the school a better place. Upon his retirement, he hopes to have made the impact he aimed to make.

"One of the big things I hope is that I've gotten kids to look at their lives and really appreciate the fact that (they) are alive," Bushong said. "I know that sounds kind of corny, but every day I get up and think 'Here's another day I get to live, and life is an amazing accomplishment.' Biology is all about studying life. I would hope that we've done some things outside of the textbook that have made them appreciate their existence here and those of others."

"The way (Mr. Bushong) always told those classic jokes made the class more interesting. He made a relatively boring class fun, which I think is the ultimate mark of a good teacher." -John Sims (11)

"Music can change the world because it can change the people," Paul David Hewson said. To United States history teacher Tom Stephenson, music is a hobby, a way to connect with students over lyrical interests and a method of exposing new genres to young people. As summer approaches and his last year of teaching comes to a close, he reflects on the importance of music in not only the five minutes at the start of class, but in his life as a teacher.

"Music's my passion. History's my job," Stephenson said. "Most of the bands in here students don't know, but every once in a while they go 'wow who is this again?' There's always that one band that (is) going to click with somebody."

Stephenson's influence on students is not limited to the connection shared through music. A former coach of football, basketball and golf, he appreciates the impact students have on his life and the memories his involvement has made possible.

"Working with young people every day kind of helps keep me young," Stephenson said. "I was telling my students the other day what I'm concerned about (is) when I retire all of the sudden I'm not going to be around those youngsters every day and all of the sudden I'm just going to be this old man. And I don't want that to happen."

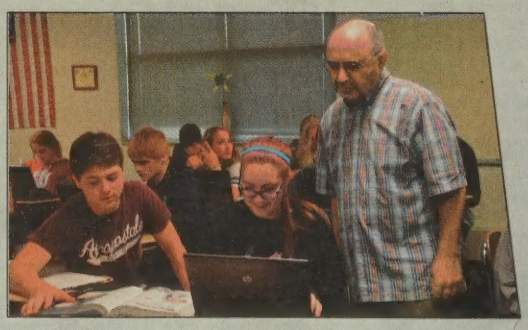
Aware of the influence of the school on him, Stephenson expects his retirement to be an adjustment for everyone.

"I think Dan Hicks and the Hot Licks song 'How Can I Miss You When You Won't Go Away' (describes my time teaching here)," Stephenson said. "They can't miss me when I don't go away, so I'm going to go away and see if they miss me."

A teacher at the school for 32 years, he feels as though his departure is a necessary change.

"People have always told me, and I didn't know whether to believe them or not, but that I'll know when it's time," Stephenson said. "It didn't take too long (to know). It was about a month into the school year. I'm ready to go on to the next phase, whatever that might be."

"Mr. Stephenson was easily one of the greatest teachers I've ever had. He made it possible for students to be creative and learn in a way that would best benefit each student. (His classroom) was always a place where opinions could be shared and... handled with respect."-Veronica Lupkin ('12)



Tom Stephenson monitors the class work of his U.S. History students.

For English teacher Olivia Miller, hard work has proven itself to be worth it, as she was recently offered the position as Director of Curriculum and Programs for North Adams Community Schools. Currently working to receive her doctorate in organizational leadership, Miller has made the decision to change jobs, trading tasks she completes as a teacher for those within the responsibility of administration.

"It's bittersweet that I'm leaving," Miller said. "Two Mondays ago when I entered the classroom I was emotional because I guess it hit me that I'm never going to have students again, and that's really one of the main reasons I became a teacher."

Although the dedication to her additional degree was fueled by her goals to reach new levels of the educational system, Miller understands she must adapt to the changes implemented by the new job description.

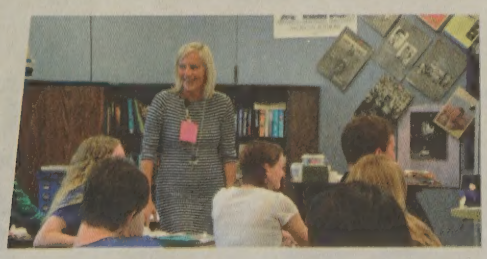
"Most of my closest friends I also teach with, so it's a double edged sword because it's a great opportunity for me professionally, but there's definitely some mornings where I stand in the hallway with Mrs. Whitt and I go 'wow next year I won't be doing this,'" Miller said. "I think that's going to be a huge adjustment because I will be in central offices where there are four people."

Despite the switch in her career path, Miller appreciates her English background, as it will aid her in writing grants and documenting plans.

"I will be writing the curriculum from pre-K through twelfth grade," Miller said. "Like this year when the English department rolled out dual credits and new course offerings, we'll be doing that at a much larger scale. The programs really deal with funding aspects so (I'll help) make sure Title One and Title Two money or educational grants are there."

Despite the tangible differences between her responsibilities leading a classroom and developing a curriculum, Miller is confident that her six years teaching have prepared her for her new job in a different district. Her appreciation of the her teaching career will never fade.

"Homestead's given me a lot of opportunities to really grow and mature as a teacher and really any resources we've ever asked for, the administration has supported putting them in our hands," Miller said. "Central office has put me in a position to be able to take my next position."



Olivia Miller participates in a class discussion with her students.

Mrs. Miller is one of my favorite teachers at Homestead because she is such a confident leader and a genuine person. She has made an impact on my outlook for the future and taught me that you can truly accomplish any goal with the proper mindset."-Gaby Meissner (10)